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A HISTORY OF PRAYER

THE FIRST TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Edited by

ROY HAMMERLING

BRILL

A History of Prayer

Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition

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For Peggy
Jeremiah, Rachel, Josh
and Nelly Hammerling

In memory of
Emil Hammerling
(14 July 1929–13 October 2002)

Also in memory of
Marietta Ekberg
(10 March 1922–3 July 2008)

Augustine, *On the Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 2.3.14: "One might ask whether we ought to pray with words or deeds, or what necessity we have for prayer, especially since God already knows what we need before we ask. Nevertheless, the act of prayer purges, cleanses, and clarifies our heart and makes it more capable of seeing and embracing the divine gifts that pour forth upon us from the spirit. God does not heed the ambitious desires of our prayers, because God is always ready to shine divine light upon us, not a visible light but an intellectual and spiritual one. Sadly we are rarely ready to turn our eyes toward it and instead we twist aside to other alluring objects out of a desire for momentary pleasures that pass away as soon as they are grasped. In prayer, however, our hearts turn to God, whose generosity always readily overflows. If only we will but embrace what God offers: in turning away from the world and its fleeting moments of temporal joy the purification of the inner eye allows true vision and turns our gaze from what we crave. So the eyes of the purified heart without blinking or wavering lid bear the pure light that shines divinely. Not only does the eye bear it, but it abides in it; not only without difficulty, but even with unspeakable joy, with which the blessed life is truly and genuinely brought to fulfillment."

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Roy Hammerling
Concordia College
January 1, 2008

ABBREVIATIONS

ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Series
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers Series
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
CCCM	*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*
CCSL	*Corpus Christianiorum, Series Latina*
CSA	*Corpus Scriptorum Augustinianorum*
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
CONF	*Collationes* or Conferences of Cassian
FC	Fathers of the Church Series
IGR	*Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*
INST	*Institutione* of Cassian
LNPFA	Select Library of Latin Nicene Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
MGH AA	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Auctorum antiquissimorum*
NPNF	Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers
OGIS	*Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*
PG	*Patrologia cursus completes: series Graeca*. Ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1857–1866.
PL	*Patrologia cursus completes: series Latina*. Ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1841–1864.
QS	Qumran Scrolls
RB	The *Regula* or Rule of St. Benedict
RM	*Regula Magistri* or Rule of the Master
SBLSBS	SBL Sources for Biblical Study
SC	*Sources Chrétiennes*
ST	*Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas

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Karlfried Froehlich, a native of Saxony, Germany, studied theology, history, and classical languages at Goettingen, Paris, and Basel. From Basel he earned a doctorate summa cum laude under Oscar Cullmann in 1963. Taking up residence in the United States, he taught first at Drew University and from 1968 to 1992 at Princeton Theological Seminary where he held the Benjamin B. Warfield chair in church history. An active member of the Lutheran Church, he was a member of the Lutheran—Roman Catholic National Dialogue in the 1970s and 80s and later of the Reformed—Lutheran Conversations Group which led to the 1997 declaration of full communion between the churches involved. His scholarly interests center on the history of biblical interpretation, a field to which he has contributed significantly through his teaching and writing. A major achievement was the publication in 1992 of a facsimile edition of the Ordinary Gloss, the standard Bible commentary of the Middle Ages, on which he collaborated with Margaret Gibson of Liverpool and Oxford.

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INTRODUCTION
PRAYER—A SIMPLY COMPLICATED SCHOLARLY PROBLEM

What is prayer? What can academics learn by examining prayers of the ancients? How have scholars approached the complicated issues of the study of prayer in the past? What is the future of such study? This volume only begins to seek a solution to these questions. Nevertheless, in order to uncover answers, a general manageable focus is needed; therefore, the assembled academics in this work direct their scholarly research at 1. a particular place—the ancient Mediterranean and European regions; 2. a specific period in history—from the time of the first century down to the Reformation; and 3. an explicit theological tradition—Christianity, although one article and various references also deal with Judaism as well. These historical, geographic, and religious concerns are in turn examined by a diverse group of interdisciplinary scholars, who explore the concept of prayer in a wide variety of multi-faceted contexts, forms, practices, and content. Together they build on scholarship from the past, offer insights in the present, and suggest areas of research for the future. As a result, the articles individually, and the book as a whole, demonstrate that the academic study of prayer provides unique insights into the history of spirituality, despite the fact that such study has many difficulties inherent in the exercise, not least of which is a coherent and comprehensive definition of prayer. It must also be noted at this juncture that this volume because of its focus also has its limitations,[1] as does every work of this nature; nevertheless, it

[1] The editor of this volume from the outset would like to be clear about some of its constraints. Whereas this volume encompasses a wide range of topics, the original conception of the work was to be broader and to include scholarly articles on early Christian women, medieval women mystics, Franciscan and mendicant spirituality, Celtic Christianity, and Eastern Orthodoxy. Some of the projected authors intended to use feminist approaches in their scholarship as well. Unfortunately, at times scholars due to illness or other unforeseen occurrences are not able to contribute as originally intended; hence for our purposes the aforementioned areas are regrettable lacunae in this volume. Fortunately, some of these gaps are filled by other recent publications. For example, Tim Johnson has edited an excellent volume entitled, *Franciscans at Prayer* for Brill Publications (2007). Future works will no doubt address the other gaps as well, and hopefully this work and sessions sponsored at the International Medieval Conferences in Kalamazoo and Leeds have been a small catalyst for such scholarship. Nevertheless,

contributes to scholarship on the history of spirituality by focusing on prayer in an interdisciplinary way.

Benedicta Ward once wrote to me in a letter, "Prayer is spirituality." Dr. Ward and other academics who have written in this area have keenly observed that anyone seeking an in-depth grasp of the nature of particular spiritual traditions must at some point look at how that tradition observes prayer, because prayer is at the heart of all religious practice and belief. Prayer indeed is where the most earnest expression of faith, religious practice, theological conviction, and even theologically sophisticated thought can be found. Some writers, especially monastic scholars like Benedicta Ward SLG and Columba Stewart OSB, have expertly written on prayer for years, but lately other academics from a variety of academic fields have begun to turn to the topic as well. The insightful medieval historian, Rachel Fulton, who has done noteworthy work on prayer, has correctly observed, "What is prayer? This is a question that historians have been asking themselves a lot lately, with, as yet, somewhat limited success."[2] Indeed, a definition or even a broad consensus concerning the nature of prayer has been difficult to come by in part because many scholars assume a definition of prayer without attempting to define it. Likewise, many have tended to pursue the study of spirituality by looking at a variety of valuable primary sources without attempting to look too closely at prayer itself. Yet the importance of examining prayer more closely has been known for some time. Over a century ago Auguste Sabatier (1839–1901), the French Protestant theologian and biblical scholar, noted that, "Prayer is religion in act; that is, prayer is real religion…Religion is nothing if it be not the vital act by which the entire mind seeks to save itself by clinging to the principle from which it draws its life. This act is prayer, by which

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as far as this volume is concerned, when some of the originally intended articles were unable to be included, other scholars contributed pieces which sadly were not in the areas lost, but which nevertheless add to the depth of this volume. Columba Stewart and Roy Hammerling added extra pieces, for example, and the editor in particular would have liked to have had the original articles instead of his own. What remains is a valuable contribution in its own right, even if its focus is narrower than originally intended. The current emphasis and contribution of this work has shifted more towards the analysis of monastic prayer and the central prayer of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer.

[2] Rachel Fulton, "Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice," *Speculum* 81.3 (July 2006), 700. Some other important recent works on prayer are Jean-François Cottier, *La prière en latin de l'Antiquité au XVIe siècle* (Turnhout, 2006) and Ermanno Ancilli, *La Preghiera: bibbia, teologia, espeienze stoiche* (Rome, 1988), in 2 volumes.

term I understand no vain exercise of words, no mere repetition of sacred formulae, but the very movement itself of the soul, putting itself in a personal relation of contact with the mysterious power of which it feels the presence."[3] Scholars, who work on the time period from the Roman Empire down to the Reformation, have indeed recently engaged the topic of prayer more closely, but in order to do so they have had trouble for a variety of reasons. Most of them have to do with the complicated contexts out of which the prayers themselves arise, the wide range of forms and practices surrounding prayer, and the sheer breadth of content that prayers encompass.

The difficulty of developing a comprehensive academic definition of prayer lies partly in the fact that prayer itself is at one and the same time a very simple and remarkably complicated concept. On a basic level, everyone understands what prayer is, because of their own personal experience, either as a practitioner or as an observer of others who pray. As a result, most people would be able to define prayer simply in the same way that John Chrysostom (d. 407) does, "Prayer is conversation with God."[4] And yet, despite a nearly universal familiarity with the idea of prayer and an initial grasp of the concept, any attempt to define it immediately runs into grave difficulty. For as soon as one tries to analyze prayer, the complexity of the notion manifests itself, because prayers are not only as diverse as the people who utter them, but they exist in a myriad of contexts, forms, and practices, which if ignored will cause confusion and lead to erroneous scholarly analysis. The content of prayer requires that it be analyzed in its own habitat; whether the context is a cathedral or a cloister, a mountain top or cavern, or an arena filled with deadly animals or a closet—the context clearly matters. Likewise the form of the prayer also shapes the interpretation; whether the form is that of a song or an imageless state of mind and heart, in a book or a spontaneous offering of words, petitions which flows out a rich oral tradition, or a poem or dramatic recounting of the deeds of God in narrative form—all forms affect

[3] Quoted in William James, *The Varieties of Religion Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (New York, 1902; reprinted New York, 1982), p. 462 quoting Auguste Sabatier, *Esquisse d'une philosophie de la religion d'après la psychologie et l'historie*, (Paris, 1897), pp. 24–26. See also the discussion of Sabatier's comments in Rachel Fulton, "Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice," *Speculum* 81.3 (July 2006), 702.

[4] John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Genesin* 30.5. I'm indebted to Dr. Ralph Quere for his introducing me to John Chrysostom, and indeed, most of the ancient Christian authors of importance.

the interpretation. Again, the actual practice of prayer affects how a prayer is to be viewed; whether people pray on their knees, facing east, or with eyes lifted to heaven—the practice is of consequence. Thus, any attempt at a definition of prayer in history demands not only an attentiveness to these issues but that a wide variety of academic disciplines turn their tools on the problem of prayer in a collaborative manner. Before scholars can do this, however, it is helpful for a moment to consider some of the broader issues concerning the context, form, practice, and especially the content of prayer. What follows are some key elements that the scholars of this volume kept in mind when they developed their academic analyses of prayer.

The Contexts of Prayers

The contexts of prayers may be broken down into three categories: the historical context of the time the prayer was first composed—whether it was uttered, written, sung, or experienced; the context of the time in which the prayer is offered in the years following its original inception—i.e. how it was used in another historical period; and, the contextual physical place and space in which the prayer is actually prayed in both of the previous contexts.

Concerning the context of a prayer in the time when it was first conceived and offered, by way of illustration, we may briefly examine the central prayer of the Christian Church, the Lord's Prayer (LP). The LP, it can be argued, originated with Jesus himself (cf. Matthew 6:9–13 and Luke 11:2–4). However, the two earliest sources (Matthew and Luke's gospels) which talk about the original contextual place, where the prayer was handed over by Jesus, do not agree upon where and how the prayer came into being. The context of Matthew suggests that Jesus taught it to the people with him during the Sermon on the Mount. Luke 11 (sometimes referred to as the Sermon on the Plain as opposed to a mount) suggests that Jesus handed over the LP specifically to his disciples who asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Scholars desiring to analyze the LP in the context of Matthew and Luke must take into account the context of the prayer, and to do so immediately suggests at the very least two different interpretive options (for more on this issue see in this volume Karlfried Froehlich's "The Lord's Prayer in Patristic Literature" and Roy Hammerling, "The Lord's Prayer in Early Christian Polemics").

Over time, the LP continued to be prayed throughout the history of Christianity and the LP can be found in a myriad of later contexts, everywhere from worship to private devotional prayers in the home and out in the public world. For instance, in the sixth century Caesarius of Arles (c. 470–542) in Gaul encouraged his parishioners to pray the LP to ward off evil in a manner that reminds the modern reader of private magical incantations. Although the LP uttered at some ill-omen is still the same prayer that Jesus taught, nevertheless, it is used in a drastically different way than Jesus originally does in the gospels and hence the context suggests a unique interpretation in both instances (cf. Roy Hammerling, "The Lord's Prayer in Early Christian Polemics").

Finally, people prayed the LP in a variety of spatial contexts over time. The two primary overarching contexts were that of Christian communal worship and private devotional practice. In fact there is no corner of the early Christian world where these two contexts did not make healthy use of the LP. In worship the LP was prayed by the entire gathered congregation before the Eucharist, and thus early Christian writers, for instance, shifted the interpretation of the words "daily bread" in the fourth petition to include the concept of spiritual bread, or the bread of the Lord's Supper, as well as physical bread (for more on the communal and private use of the LP see L. Edward Phillip's article "Prayer in the First Four Centuries A.D."). Privately the LP was regularly spoken daily by many early Christians in their own devotional practices especially in their homes, but elsewhere as well.[5]

The LP aside for a moment, it must be noted that the context of prayers can either lead to a freedom or a structured rigidity of prayerful practice. Columba Stewart notes that Benedictine monks in monasteries reading spiritual texts in order to motivate a devotional life were liberated in their prayers to seek out their own particular expressions of faith. Says Stewart, "*Lectio* is sometimes presented as a method or technique of prayer, but it is really a kind of anti-technique, a disposition more than a method. Therefore it is hard to describe or teach because it varies so much from person to person, shaped by temperament, individual needs and ways of thinking."[6] On the other end of the scale Edward Phillips notes in this volume that, "Prayer, both private and communal, is

[5] Paul Bradshaw, *Interpretations of Prayer in the Early Church* (London, 1981).

[6] Columba Stewart, *Prayer and Community: The Benedictine Tradition* (Maryknoll, NY, 1998), p. 39.

fundamentally a ritual activity, and ritual is resistant to change, especially on the levels of physical gesture and daily pattern."[7] The farther we move into the middle ages the more prayers were written down and as a result prayers were fixed not only in writing but also in the particular types of contexts, namely both the place of prayer and places prayers found themselves, like books. This practice profoundly affected not only what but how people prayed (cf. Susan Boynton, "*Libelli Precum* in the Central Middle Ages," Roger Wieck, "The Book of Hours," and Paul Robinson, "Sermons on the Lord's Prayer and the Rogation Days in the Later Middle Ages").

In the preceding cases the importance of focusing upon the complicated issues of the context of the origin, time, and place of prayer allows scholars to begin to understand the natures, roles, and interpretations of prayers more accurately over time. Since no monolithic interpretation of the LP, for example, can or should be offered, it is thus up to scholars to apply their scholarly crafts to analyze the LP and other prayers appropriately. By doing this, they all are able then to note how spiritual trends develop, evolve, and even at times disappear. By focusing on prayer specifically scholars will be examining and explaining the heart of a faith tradition's beliefs and practices.

The Forms and Practices of Prayer

Similarly it is important to take into account the form and practice of prayers. Prayers exist in an almost endless variety of forms. Often the physical forms of prayers (be they written, oral, sung, a part of one's imagination, or heartfelt emotion) determine how prayers will be practiced and ultimately how they should be interpreted. The following instructive and illustrative, but hardly comprehensive, considerations suggest how the interpretations of prayers are affected by understanding their forms and practices.

Written Form

First of all, prayers are often passed along from one generation to another orally or as words on a written page. The purpose of all this

[7] For a discussion of the importance of ritual pattern in constructing the origins of Christianity see Étienne Nodet and Justin Taylor, *The Origins of Christianity: An Exploration* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1998).

is so that the text may once again be prayed, thought, experienced, and/or sung or chanted and the faithful may benefit from the exercise. Prayers make their way to the written page either directly by the one who composes the prayer or by later writers, who write down prayers they hear others pray or simply know as a part of an oral tradition. Sometimes prayers last for long periods of time simply in an oral form and are only written down after many years have passed. If the general scholarly opinion concerning the dating of the gospels of Matthew and Luke are accurate and they were written about the year 70 C.E., then that means the LP most likely existed in at least in an oral form for decades (if it indeed was taught by Jesus sometime during the last three years of his life, and assuming he died around 29 C.E.).

Likewise the issue of transmission is significant. In the early church prayers often were offered by saints before their martyrdoms in response to a particular confrontation with hostile authorities, imprisonment, or death; only later were these prayers written down by those who either witnessed or reported on the event (e.g. *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*). In some instances the saint herself wrote down the prayers she offered to the divinity while in prison (cf. *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity*), and another later editor of her works added further details and other prayers from the martyrdom event, because obviously the saint (in the aforementioned case, Perpetua) was unable to do so. The preceding scenario assumes a literal interpretation of events, something most scholars speculate about. In many cases, scholars think it more likely that the dying saints never prayed these prayers at all, or at least not the lengthy recorded versions, and in fact that the prayers are the fabrication of a reporter, or a later writer who has some particular purpose in mind for recalling the martyrdom event in a specific way. In this one example alone then we have a number of possibilities, namely, the prayer was prayed in oral form by the martyr and recorded by either an eyewitness or later writer who heard about the event; the prayer was prayed but lost and another recorded the prayer using imagination; or the prayer was the fabrication of an author for a particular purpose and was never oral. However, whichever option a scholar chooses to accept says a great deal about their interpretive methodology and their own bias with regard to the text, and this will affect how they examine the prayer and ultimately interpret its meaning.

In written form, prayers can vary a great deal. One could argue that Augustine's *Confessions* is one long sustained written prayer to God, and therefore prayer can be book length and spiritual/autobiographical in nature. On the other end of the spectrum, prayers have been found

in miniature form on scraps of papyri, tombs, walls of homes, eating utensils, jewelry, and ostraca. Prayers may have poetic, liturgical, or a highly refined literary forms and styles and at other times prayers may be poor prose and/or heartfelt bursts of emotion in words. In all cases, however, in order for the scholar to examine them, prayers must be preserved in some form or other, and this in the ancient world was almost always in written form, however, musical and artistic depictions of prayers are also available and instructive.

Prayer Forms

The varieties of prayer forms can at times be characterized as belonging to particular physical styles. Form styles at times flow out of content, and at times the content visibly requires that a prayer take on a form, which can be talked about apart from or in conjunction with the individual content of prayers. If we look at the bible and how some of its prayers were used we can see that certain prayerful intentions suggest a certain form. For example, the Medieval prayer book, the Psalter or the 150 Psalms of the Old Testament, as prayers (used extensively by Jews and Christians, especially by Christian monastics—see Columba Stewart, "Prayer Among the Benedictines") have an obvious prayer form. The Psalms are all poetic, or some might say liturgical, in their visible structure varying in length from long and complicated prayers (Psalm 119), to remarkably short and simple (Psalm 117); still they all have a poetic look on the page. By way contrast, however, other biblical prayers are more narrative obviously prose-like. Some examples of this type of prayer would be prayers that recall arguments like the ones Abraham (Genesis 18) and Moses had with God (Exodus 32).

If we return to our earlier LP illustration at this point for a moment we can see that scholars have noted that the LP has a poetic and liturgically friendly structure. The poetic form no doubt helped individuals memorize the prayer and also allowed them to appropriate it as a central part of private devotions rather easily. Likewise, the rhythmic form of the LP allowed it to become a central prayer in Christian worship, one that could be spoken or sung easily by the entire community in unison.

It must also be noted, however, that sometimes the very form or styles of prayers can render the content of those same prayers to some lesser or greater degree comprehensible or incomprehensible. The Apostle Paul tells his readers that some prayers in his day were sometimes

offered in the form of tongues (*glossolalia*, cf. 1 Corinthians 12–14) and the actual words were not intelligible without a spiritually-gifted interpreter. During the middle ages, prayers at times were presented in liturgical settings where the primary language of a worshipful appeal was in Latin and the vernacular language of the congregation was something other, like German. While parishioners might be able to pray Latin prayers in Germany via rote memorization, they often had very little idea what they were actually praying. The intention of the Latin on some level was to provide uniformity to the prayers of all the faithful in Europe, but the result, however, was that often the faithful were clueless with regard to the content, even though they were familiar and perhaps intimately devoted to the form. While some people in the modern world might say that such an unintelligible prayer has little or no value, others in history may not have seen it that way. In fact, there are many in the Roman Catholic Church today who still long for the Latin Mass and prayers to return and who argue that the real beauty of some prayers has been lost in translation.

The Actual Practices of Prayer

The spirit (i.e. devotional mood or attitude) in which prayers are offered can profoundly affect the context, form, and practice of prayer. Similarly the actual practice of praying also can deeply alter the meaning of prayers. Spontaneous prayers in the ancient church,[8] and modern religious communities for that matter, have at times been prized above other carefully crafted written prayers of ancient origin because they are seen to possess a more heartfelt and genuine character. Indeed, some suggest that prayers that are written out, repetitive, rote, or mechanical are of little or any worth whatsoever. Still others value honored written prayers which have survived the test of time and date back to an earliest spiritual authors or religious traditions over and against more emotional or impulsively offered petitions. In either of the preceding cases, and in every ritual in between, the action of praying must be taken into account whenever possible while analyzing prayers. Some of the more important practices represented in this volume are as follows:

[8] Cf. Ambrose, *De fide* 1.137; R. P. C. Hanson, "The Liberty of the Bishop to Improve Prayer in the Eucharist" *Vigiliae Christianae* 15.3 (September 1961), pp. 173–176.

Imageless and Imageful Prayers

Some spiritual guides in the past encouraged prayer that advocated the use of imagination ("imageful" prayer as I will call it); this involves vividly recalling a biblical or other holy scene to produce a prayerful attitude and/or experience. The prayer experience may be provoked by looking at a physical object, like a crucifix, as was the case with Julian of Norwich (c. 1342–1413) or Joan of Arc (1412–1431). Eastern Orthodox traditions in particular relied on icons or physical images as a central component of prayerful practices. Roger Wieck's article "Prayer for the People: The Book of Hours" skillfully explains how prayers in Books of Hours alongside artistic depictions of biblical and other edifying scenes of art (e.g. the lives of saints) enlivened the prayer lives of late medieval Christians. In Bridget of Sweden's case (c. 1303–1373), a saint might simply use a vivid recollection of the crucifixion to enhance prayer and in order to pray more imagefully.

At other times imageless prayer, such as Evagrius Ponticus (c. 346–399) advocates (cf. Columba Stewart's article "Imageless Prayer and the Theological Vision of Evagrius Ponticus" and David Fagerberg, "Prayer as Theology") was considered to be the highest and most beneficial way of practicing prayer. Rachel Fulton has clearly demonstrated that Christians in the medieval church were often at the very least as interested in how to pray, that is in the method, as they were in what to pray.[9]

Good, Better, and Best Prayerful Practices

Some early Christian authors defined various practices of prayer as dialoguing with the divine or a "raising up of the spirit" to God.[10] Some methods of lifting the spirit were promoted over others and such views often encouraged a prayerful outlook that recommended the higher or better ways of praying over and against the lower or less valuable means, which were encouraged for beginners to move beyond. Origen (*De Oratione* 14, c. 185–254) and Cassian (*Collationes* 9.9, c. 360–435) point to the prayers mentioned in what they believed to be Paul's letter to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:1, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for

[9] Rachel Fulton, "Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice," *Speculum* 81.3 (July 2006), 700–733.

[10] Evagrius Ponticus, *De Oratione* 3.35; John Damascene, *De fide Orthodoxa* 3.24.

everyone." NRSV) as being illustrative of such types. Prayers which depend upon a specific method of contemplation or some ennobled meditative practice vary greatly throughout the medieval period (cf. Rik Van Nieuwenhove, "The Trinity, Prayer, and the Nature of Contemplation").

Prayerful Postures

The physical posture of those speaking with God likewise reveals much about how the practice of prayer can influence the contexts, forms, and content of prayer. Believers pray while kneeling (Acts 20:36), standing (Mark 11:25; Tertullian, *De Corona* 3, *De Oratione* 23), with hands lifted upward toward God (1 Timothy 2:8; Origen, *De Oratione* 32.2f.), with heads covered or uncovered (1 Corinthians 11:4; Tertullian, *Apologeticum* 30.4), or as penitent petitioners (who prostrated themselves in prayer publicly—like Emperor Theodosius, c. 347–395, doing penance before the church of Bishop Ambrose, c. 338–397). Celtic monks are recorded at times of having had the habit of praying crosfigel (i.e. standing with their arms stretched out to their sides so that their body was in the shape of a cross),[11] and still others prayed standing facing the east (e.g. *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* 5.1; Origen, *De Oratione* 32). The places where the postured devotees offered their heartfelt entreaties (in a church or chapel, in one's bedroom or closet, in a monastic cell, in the wilderness or desert, or standing up to one's neck in ice cold ocean water as some Celtic monks were want to do) also affect how scholars analyze certain prayers.

Prayerful Good Deeds

Prayers were often considered to be the greatest good and most worthy works religious people were able to offer up to God. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215) simply declared, "A prayer that is accepted by God is a good deed" (*Pedagogus* 3.69.3). Tertullian (c. 160–225) further develops this idea arguing, "Christ has willed that [prayer] be operative for no evil: He conferred on it all its virtue in the cause of good" (*De Oratione* 29). Implicit in these statements, however, is also an opposite reality, namely, that within inappropriately offered prayers there remains the possibility of the danger that God will reject prayers put forth in

[11] For another example of this type of posture also see Tertullian, *De Oratione* 14 & 17.

pride or any other unacceptable sinful manner. What made a specific prayer unworthy of God's ears? Sometimes it was the spirit in which it was offered, at other times its context, form, or practice (e.g. praying like hypocrites standing and seeking recognition in public before all, cf. Matthew 6:5–6). Most often, however, an acceptable prayer was judged on its content.

The Content of Prayers

The content of prayers reveals the true hearts of the lives and theologies of those who pray. Pleas offered to God expose the self perception of petitioners, their world views, and their particular outlooks on the divine. Prayers that are prayed by Arian Christians in the early church do have unique elements and emphases that are readily recognizable; if they do not have these characteristics then they plainly cannot be the prayers of Arians. Hence there is a naked honesty about prayer in that it must reveal the depth of the petitioners' theological positions and religious world views.

Content alone, however, is not enough for the scholar. Often when prayers are removed from their contexts, forms, or practices they become ambiguous with regard to what their content means. To illustrate this point let us look at perhaps the most important prayer within the Orthodox Christian tradition, the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner"). The so-called Hesychast medieval prayer tradition of Orthodoxy emphasizes the Jesus Prayer and it remains to this day a vital prayer ritual practice for some in Orthodoxy. The tradition is simply based upon an uncomplicated short prayer, which is meant to be prayed continuously in accordance with St. Paul's command, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).[12] If this prayer is removed from its context and practice, it could easily be considered appropriate for nearly all Christian religious traditions anywhere in the world and throughout history. Still, in an Orthodox context the prayer comes to life with a rich and life-giving reality that it is hard to imagine would ever be the case in any other Christian tradition. But even the Jesus Prayer requires a context within Orthodoxy itself to make further sense of the prayer. Whether the Jesus Prayer

[12] Irénée Hausherr, SJ, *Hésychasme et Prière* (Rome, 1966).

is offered during the middle ages or placed in the context of the later nineteenth-century Russian Orthodoxy makes a world of difference; anyone familiar with the nineteenth-century spiritual classic *The Way of the Pilgrim* (a.k.a. *The Pilgrim's Tale*) can attest to the previous point. For the Orthodox not only the words of the prayer but also how, where, and when one prays the Jesus Prayer is what gives the prayer remarkable vivacity. Content, therefore, interacts with form and practice to create an identifying prayerful experience, or perhaps better yet we might say prayerful consciousness, in a particular context and time.

Prayer Content and Context

The clear and focused content of a cherished ancient prayer may at times be adapted widely over a variety of surprisingly diverse religious practices and contexts. For example, to return to the LP once again, in Christian worship the LP was a central part of Christian liturgical settings throughout the period of the early church. The LP at this time, however, was spoken in worship by Donatists, Pelagians, Nestorians, Augustinian Roman-Catholics, and every other form of early Christian tradition for that matter. In fact, each group claimed that they prayed and interpreted the LP more faithfully than the next group, and therefore this legitimized their own tradition in the process. Thus, it is the context which reveals what the interpretation of the LP should be (see Roy Hammerling, "The Lord's Prayer in Early Christian Polemics").

Prayer Content in Prayerful Forms and Practices

Some ancient theologians also felt that the content of individual prayers needed to conform to certain patterns or subject matter. Origen, as has been briefly noted above, believed that prayers should include a specific order of praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition and doxology; or to spell this pattern out a bit more comprehensively, Origen stated that a prayer needs a beginning address to the divine, a thanksgiving and blessing offered for those who pray and others in need, a frank and honest acknowledgment of sin, a petition for healing to break the habit of those aforementioned sins, a plea for forgiveness, a request for heavenly blessings for the one who prays and others, and last of all the prayer ought to be concluded by glorifying God through Christ in the Holy Spirit (*De Oratione* 33.1). Prayerful content often demanded a certain prayerful form. Another example of this might be a prayer of repentance for a particular sin in a monastic setting which required a

specific act of penance according to a penitential book; a minor sin required only so many LPs, while graver sins might demand a greater act of prayer, like going on pilgrimage to a far off holy place to remove the sin.

Prayer Content and Interpretive Methods

Scholars, because of the above complexities, need to look at prayers from an assortment of scholarly approaches and interpretative methods. Indeed, there are a number of academic disciplines that are able and willing to discuss prayer. If we once again turn to the LP as an example, this one brief prayer of seven petitions has been examined by a host of biblical scholars, art historians, interpreters of liturgical works, monastic researchers, musicologists, religious institutional historians, theologians of various emphases, economists, sociologists, scholars of spirituality, and many other disciplines as well. One notable example of how one scholar looks at the LP from less traditional religious disciplinary approaches in this volume is Michael Joseph Brown's wonderful, "Piety and Proclamation: Gregory of Nyssa's Sermon on the Lord's Prayer."

Still, the task of being thorough can be daunting; a theologian or historian interested at simply gaining a basic competent overview of the topic of LP commentaries in the middle ages would literally have to wade through thousands of works that are extant in a rich variety of ancient languages from every corner of the Christian world, over vast periods of time, not to mention a extraordinary range of Christian faith traditions. Therefore, prayer texts at times force academics to focus much more narrowly than they would like on a particular time and place, or genre of texts in order to just begin to gain a credible handle on the topic. In this volume alone there are a number of articles on the LP, but they too are only able to initiate a discussion on some of the major difficulties surrounding the scholarly approach to prayer in general and the LP specifically. Nevertheless they are a start.

If any scholarly progress is to be made in the area of the study of prayer, authors must engage the topic with as many academic tools as they have ability in. The sheer richness and depth of a ubiquitous religious practice like prayer demands an understanding of the complicated contexts, forms, practices, and contents of prayer in and through a healthy collection of scholarly disciplines.

Prayer and the Academic Disciplines: Selective Examples

Some scholars who are included in this volume have researched articles that are closely related and even overlap to a significant degree. At other times the pieces seem to stand almost alone in their focus. In any case, by looking at them collectively they present a helpful addition to scholarship on prayer. The articles themselves can be grouped under the following thematic headings and a few broad general comments can be made.

Prayer in the Context of Historical Periods

Some articles in this volume use as their organizing principle, and means of narrowing the subject matter to a manageable size, prayers within a designated and therefore limited historical period. Edward Phillips, a professor of the Practice of Christian Worship, offers a clear and insightful survey of Christian attitudes towards prayer during the earliest days of Christianity in his aptly titled, "Prayer in the First Four Centuries A.D." Karlfried Froehlich, an historical theologian and expert in classical languages, in his classic article "The Lord's Prayer in Patristic Literature," besides picking an era also narrows his research thematically as his title suggests. Froehlich's research was the inspiration for Roy Hammerling, an early and medieval church historian, who delves more specifically into the topic of "The Lord's Prayer in Early Christian Polemics." Michael Brown's article "Piety and Proclamation: Gregory of Nyssa's Sermon on the Lord's Prayer," limits itself to one specific author (more will be said about this below) and his broader historical context; the latter point is significant for this section of our discussion. Columba Stewart, a theologian and monastic historian, writes on "Prayer Among the Benedictines" thus providing an overview of prayer in one of the most prayer-oriented religious groups in the middle ages by narrowing his research to early Benedictine history.

While the preceding scholars are in some way all church historians, theologians, and liturgical scholars their particular foci construct a broader picture of how prayer developed over time in the earliest days of the Christian tradition. Philips relies on liturgical documents; Froehlich's closely examines patristic theology and archeological sources focused on the LP; Hammerling emphasizes texts dealing with tensions

over interpretation of the LP; Brown not only looks at Gregory of Nyssa, but also the economic Roman world around him; and Stewart zeros in on the importance of prayer in the Rule of Benedict—one of the most influential documents of the middle ages—in a way that has never been done before.

The scholarly pictures show not only how prayer was central to every aspect of the Christian tradition in the early churches, but how the earliest emerging and struggling churches developed in remarkably sophisticated and complex ways. While prayer traditions tend to change slowly over time, nevertheless they do change; to observe the evolution of Christian prayer is to see the dynamic development of Christianity itself. What comes into view in these articles is a picture of a group of first to sixth century churches (rather than a monolithic entity known as "the Church") struggling to define themselves in their own particular contexts over and against other congregations who have similar or different theological positions. But together the collection of scholarly pieces in this book reveal a group of churches forging their identities in a world of notable adversity and vitality. There is a limited quantity and type of primary texts from this early period of Christianity; nevertheless these scholars tease out what is available to them and they are still able to offer a fresh perspective on early Christian spirituality, history, theology, and religious practice, because they focus on prayer.

A few other selective examples may be useful at this point. Reading all of the aforementioned articles reveals one overwhelming theme, namely, the central role of worship and communal life in the development of prayer over the life of the early church. Phillips, who provides the broad overview for other authors, especially notes how Christian prayer demonstrates a great deal of continuity with other prayer practices in various traditions of the time, say for example Jewish practices. A similar point is made by Michael Brown who at first appears to simply be looking at Gregory of Nyssa's sermons, but who in the end underscores a notable emphasis upon a social gospel in the early church by connecting these sermons to their historical context. Brown does this by combining practical economic and sociological analysis of Gregory's historical context of the Roman Empire in light of Gregory's sermons for the laity of his congregation. Brown ultimately ties prayer, specifically the LP, to the context of economic and social poverty, thereby illuminating the spiritual mindset of Gregory in order to expose his view of the life and practice of the faithful. True spirituality, argues Brown, can never be divorced from one's political, economic, or social context, and Gregory not only knew this but also actively promoted

this connection. Gregory worried that an overemphasis upon the simple act of prayer itself could at times induce apathy toward the poor, but Gregory desired the opposite affect, i.e. social engagement with the poor as the true outcome of genuine prayer. Gregory, Brown notes, suggests that when the believer offered alms to the needy the monetary gift went directly to Christ as well. Careful examination of the prayer theology and practice discussed in Gregory of Nyssa's LP sermons not only allows but in some way requires Brown to develop an interdisciplinary methodological approach; only in this manner can Brown show how Gregory's sermons on the LP were radical calls to seek justice and social involvement in the lives of the needy rather than a mental practice divorced from life. In the end, Brown notes that life without prayer ultimately leads to social disorder and chaos for Gregory. As Brown puts it, "In Gregory's sermons on the Lord's Prayer, one can see how Christian leaders connected the practices of almsgiving and prayer to the Greco-Roman concept of civic benefaction. In the process, they cast a Christian vision of the polity, one that saw society as a whole as the object of pious practice."

One other connection that can be drawn between these articles comes in early monastic prayer, about which Froehlich notes, little is known. Stewart agrees, but by focusing on the Rule and other works that it is dependent upon, a very limited group of resources, Stewart is able to make some connections between available texts in a way that helps scholars see the innovations of Benedict's Rule in an entirely new light. Perhaps the greatest insight of Benedict with regard to prayer was to arrange the Psalms according to specific times of day in the monastic hours, thus ordering monastic prayer in a way that had never been done before, giving those who use the Rule the ability to develop their prayer lives in a remarkably dynamic way of living connected with the rhythms of everyday cycles. The connection between the content of the Rule and the historical context, form, and practices of prayer used among the early Benedictines ultimately appears in the wisdom of the "sound traditional synthesis of early Latin monastic tradition with a sophisticated understanding of what is required to create a viable community."

Prayer in the Context of Theological Thought

An examination of the seminal figures of Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330–395), Evagrius of Ponticus (c. 349–399), Augustine (c. 354–430), Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033–1109), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), and

Jan van Ruusbroec (c. 1293–1381) in this volume provides an overview of pivotal theological thinkers and their spiritual observations on prayer. While clearly some emphases have common characteristics (e.g. Brown, Barnes, and Hammerling at least in part focus on the LP, while Fagerberg and Stewart both focus on Evagrius), others do not. Still, all of these modern authors lay out particular ways in which the objects of their research are significant transitional writers in whom the sophisticated theologies and practices of prayer traditions evolve; in each instance this means that the ancient authors come out of established prayer customs, which they not only build upon but innovate. However, the one reoccurring significant theme that flows through all these authors of yesteryear is their ability to connect their deepest and most intellectually clever theologies, philosophies, and contemplative ruminations to the life of prayer in a way that utterly blurs the prayerful distinctions between the life of the mind and the heart. In other words, in every instance, despite the brilliance and reliance of these authors upon their intellectual abilities, the greatest theologians of the past do not see their theologically sophisticated views as being different from prayer. A brief survey of these articles can help to show how some evolution occurs over time with regard to attitudes toward prayer, but also how each historical author finally seeks to hold as one both prayer and intellectual activity concerning the divine. Gregory of Nyssa's ideas on connecting prayer as an act of the mind with a life of service of the poor, has already been commented on above.

David Fagerberg, an expert in liturgical theology, in "Prayer as Theology," seeks to understand the relationship of prayer and theology in the work of Evagrius. He notes that two realities exist for Evagrius, namely that the theologian prays and those who pray have theologies, but he wonders, "Are prayer and theology separate or inseparable?" In order to answer this question, Dr. Fagerberg turns to the desert Abbas and Ammas. In the desert, argues Fagerberg, such a question refuses to be dismissed with simple answers; in the context of ancient desert, theology and prayer were interchangeable concepts signifying the same reality. Fagerberg states that one of the key problems with the study of ancient prayer is that modern scholars at times draw too sharp a distinction between prayer and theology, something they often learn from their own particular contemporary contexts. The distinction between prayer and theology, says Fagerberg, is similar to the distinction between knowledge and love. If knowledge is understood as knowing, in a biblical sense (e.g. Adam knew Eve), then the distinctions melt away

between knowledge and love, for indeed they are the same. Prayer and theology then indeed not only represent but are the highest forms of knowledge in the ascetical desert tradition; the scholarly focus of looking at the early Christian desert tradition and Evagrius' connection to it, reveals that practice makes perfect. Prayer is theology and theology prayer. Hence, Fagerberg's use of a liturgically theological methodology provides an important analysis of Evagrius and warning to modern scholars and how they approach ancient texts.

Columba Stewart in "Imageless Prayer and the Theological Vision of Evagrius Ponticus," like Fagerberg, notes that Evagrius was a practitioner and theologian at the same time. Stewart as a monastic historian, however, points out that Evagrius combines a depth of ancient wisdom, which emerges out of a Greek philosophical context, and a profound Christian heart, which flows out of a rich theological tradition. Evagrius encourages "imageless prayer" in order to help the faithful find perfect union with God but again, for Stewart it is essential to remember the Greek and Christian monastic context of this concept, and its focus on biblical texts. Says Stewart, "Examining Evagrius' theories of mental operation and biblical exegesis helps in understanding both the imperative of imageless prayer for Evagrius and its problematic aspects." In other words, Stewart comes to a similar conclusion as Fagerberg, but he takes a different scholarly road to get there. As a result, Stewart and Fagerberg's two distinct approaches to the same text provide a complimentary depth of analysis, which more fully enriches any attempt to understand early church notions of prayer, especially with regard to the influential figure of Evagrius, who profoundly influence the thought of others after him.

Hammerling observes how Augustine's view of prayer, and especially the LP, as a sacrament led the saint to connect prayer, and the LP in particular, intimately with other sacraments, specifically baptism. The LP for Augustine was the perfect summary of Christian beliefs and theology, which pointed to the wondrous mystery of God's divine love and how Christians were to respond to this grace. In the early church context, however, people like Augustine's mentor Ambrose of Milan (339–397), were very hesitant to allow any but the baptized to pray or even see the LP. Augustine, however, wanting properly to prepare the faithful for baptism handed over the prayer to catechumens during Lent and thus became the first theologian in recorded history to do so. His motivation seems innocent enough, but he has to develop a theological framework for such an act, which at times verges on a numerological

analysis of prayer, in order to justify this shift in practice. Nevertheless, Augustine's prayer theology paves the way for later authors to abandon a traditional time-honored attitude of keeping the LP from the unbaptized. Of equal importance is the fact that Augustine cannot separate the theology of the Christian Church from the LP, which is theology's perfect summary. The LP for Augustine was a sacrament, the most worthy prayer, and the heart of Christian doctrine all in one. Nearly every author down to and through the Reformation in some way relies heavily on Augustine's commentaries of the LP.

Benedicta Ward with her usual keen eye observes a significant change in prayer attitudes in the context of the eleventh century and places the responsibility squarely in the prayerful hands of St. Anselm, whose small body of prayers and meditations have a remarkable influence on later medieval authors. Ward's observations will remind one of the aforementioned articles because again she observes how her particular ancient writer combined a remarkable intellect with deeply devotional, personal, and pious attitudes toward prayer. Like the desert fathers and mothers who were incapable of separating theology and prayer, Anselm saw theology as the essence of spiritual life. Ward also argues that Anselm's theology of the monastic life can only be approached through his prayers and meditations because he wrote no treatise on this topic. Anselm's "life and prayer were one," says Ward. His intellectual life was that of a gifted scholar, and his legacy most often is that of a great medieval Christian philosopher; but Ward notes that the scholastic endeavors of Anselm blend with his prayers completely; they literally at times where one and the same for this revered saint. The philosophically-minded Anselm was always the devoted believer, who loved God and had the ability to employ words to eloquent effect in communicating love and profound theological insight at the same time. Ward calls this Anselm's "God-centered erudition." In the end, despite being known as a scholar and monk, he was, for Ward, foremost a man of prayer who had a great capacity to communicate his complex theological ideas, basic human compassion, and friendship through his prayer life. Ward notes that Anselm in his prayers in particular presented himself not so much as the abbot, archbishop, spiritual master, or the teacher that he was, but as a companion on a "way of tribulation and glory." Anselm develops, Ward concludes, a new method of praying that combines prayer and erudite reading in a way that future Christians will widely admire and imitate.

Corey Barnes focuses upon two prayers of Jesus, namely the LP and the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, within the context of the theology of Thomas Aquinas. The interpretation of these prayers by Aquinas, Barnes argues, provides a way of understanding Aquinas's theology and spirituality of prayer. Barnes begins by insightfully noting that the longest question in the *Summa Theologica* (ST 2–2.83) focuses on prayer. This suggests the seriousness with which Aquinas took prayer in the context of his other writings. Barnes remarks that when Aquinas approaches the LP the deepest theological convictions of Aquinas come to the forefront. For Aquinas prayer is "not an act of the appetitive power but of practical reason." In the end, a logical progression of thought concerning prayer for Aquinas suggests that prayer is directly tied to God's providence. Prayer has the ability to change God's mind, hence the issue of providence is an important theological consideration in dealing with prayer in general. The discussion on prayer for Aquinas is an opportunity to wonder about the nature of human freedom and its relation to God's outside influence in the world. For Aquinas, God has "ordered creation so that human beings can freely cooperate with the divine plan." Prayer is an act of free will, an act of merit insofar as it is an act of charity and therefore benefits those who pray. God is the goal of prayer and therefore believers desire God's glory and their own enjoyment of God's beatitude. In conclusion, Barnes observes that Aquinas's teachings on prayer seem overly technical or divorced from reality, however, Aquinas is fully aware that technical theology and heartfelt prayer are closely related (a view that will remind readers of Ward's article on Anselm); for Aquinas in-depth careful analysis of prayer deepens an appreciation for the practice of prayer and at the same time answers the difficulties that arise when one thinks carefully about how prayer works. The true mystery of prayer is revealed in the LP and the prayer in Gethsemane, for Aquinas, and thus the prayers of Jesus are models by which all of prayer is illumined and clarified; the reader will note that the preceding idea is very Augustinian. Like the earlier writers, Aquinas' views in turn profoundly shaped later scholastic and spiritual writings.

Rik Van Nieuwenhove portrays the historical context of the great Flemish mystic, Jan van Ruusbroec (1293–1381), as a time when mystical experience tended toward a more unmediated private experience of the divine. Ruusbroec, however, emphasizing a unique Trinitarian analysis of prayer and contemplation urged an experience of the

common life instead. Van Nieuwenhove shows how Ruusbroec was able to reject a self-focused experiential and quietist-oriented approach toward the prayerful consciousness of his day by encouraging an active, inner, and contemplative prayer life which resulted in an emphasis upon community. In essence, Van Nieuwenhove demonstrates that Ruusbroec's notably sophisticated theology merges with a life of practical prayer by using the Trinity as his model. Van Nieuwenhove states the Ruusbroec believed that God exists in an eternal activity of intra-Trinitarian procession (that is the movement of love within the Trinity from Father to Son to Holy Spirit and by extension from creation to salvation to enlightenment) and that people in the same way should love God and others through the charitable works of prayer and worship. Ruusbroec's sophisticated Trinitarian theology and views on prayer come together not only in his thoughts but in the context of his life as a parish priest and prior of a monastery where practical concerns are never far away. Van Nieuwenhove states that for Ruusbroec prayer not only honors God and the heart of the person praying, but all of creation. For Ruusbroec God's spirit breathes into people out of love who in turn move outward with virtuous deeds and thus are ultimately drawn back into the divine so they may truly enjoy life (in an Augustinian sense). Like breathing in and out, prayer is life that flows out from God and returns through others to God. Once again, theology and practice are one.

In Ruusbroec, and in every other previously mentioned ancient authors' case, how they come to these conclusions is worthy of the articles that have been written, and in each instance both the theological sophistication of the argument and the depth of practical advice, which blur to indistinction, are certainly surprising for many modern scholars and readers.

Prayer in its Liturgical Form and Content

Another set of articles focus on the liturgical context of prayer. Interestingly enough they include both the first and last articles in this volume. First of all, L. Edward Phillips comprehensive survey of early Christian liturgical prayer practices places the entire volume on a firm scholarly footing. Phillips develops the concept that spirituality itself develops as various prayer practices change over time; prayer traditions thus manifest themselves as spirituality and also theology within faith traditions. Early on Christian spirituality and prayer emerged out of their Jewish roots with their own "rapid evolution" with regard to the nature of

divinity (the Trinity) and the community of the faithful (the church as the body of Christ). Through these innovations Christianity created its own distinctive resonance during the earliest centuries of its existence in what it believed to be its own unique access to God through prayer. This entrée was available not only through words and ideas but especially in practices most obviously available in acts of ritual worship. Philips' article together with Hammerling's piece on the LP and polemics show how there existed in the early church a dynamic and uneasy relationship between Christianity and Judaism because of prayerful innovations in Christianity. Johannes Heil's article on tenth to twelfth century Christian and Jewish relations in Germany suggests much the same reality, albeit at a later date. Thus even one millennium after the beginnings of Christianity there remained a vibrant exchange and tension between Christians and Jews concerning prayer. Prayer, concludes Phillips quoting Clement of Alexandria, is the place of humanity's deepest desires and aspirations, the place where spirituality is born and is most keenly revealed. Prayer is where goodness itself, God to be more specific, is ultimately revealed. In the end, prayer helps the petitioner, as Phillips puts it, "to participate in the nature of God." Phillips concludes, "For these early theologians, therefore, Christian prayer is the fundamental and distinctly Christian vocation."

Paul Robinson's "The Lord's Prayer in the Late Medieval Rogation Sermons," looks at how liturgical practices in the late medieval church affected the application of prayer during one particular festival of the church, Rogation Days. By examining Rogationtide homilies in particular, Robinson determines how certain regularized prayers of the church, both the LP and others in Rogationtide sermons, came to be a standardized part of the yearly worship life and piety of believers in Europe. By interpreting the LP in light of Rogation Days and Ascension Day, model preachers and theologians encouraged the ordinary sermonizers to advocate a type of prayer that was intended to fight off demons and earthly storms; such prayers were especially related to protection of the parish and the crops in the fields during the spring. The seventh petition of the LP, "deliver us from evil" was most fitting for Rogation Day concerns. The communal nature of Rogation Days was emphasized in the word, "Our" of "Our Father" in which the community of the faithful came together and processed with a physical representation of a dragon for three days in order to acknowledge Christ's victory over the dragon/devil. Robinson concludes, "Whatever the specific understanding, the Christians of the Middle Ages imitated

Christ and his faithful followers throughout history when they gathered in procession and prayed the Lord's Prayer together, all with the hope of gaining the blessing and protection from evil that God had granted in previous times."

At other times the articles stand alone in their uniqueness. Johannes Heil's article, "*Ashkenazic Piyyut*: Hebrew Poetic Prayer in a Latin Environment (The Tenth to the Twelfth Centuries)" looks at how Jewish Hebrew poetic prayer was influenced by Latin Christian poetic prayers. The complex historical situation of tenth-twelfth century Rhineland Germany, known as Ashkenas to the Jews, and the poetic sources suggests that Rhineland Jews, before the devastating pogroms after 1096, lived in a complicated world where the most powerful influence upon Jewish society was largely Latin Christians. Therefore there was a threat of a competing ideology and religious world views in the prayers of the Jews and Christians; in order to counter Christian influences effectively certain Rabbi's turned to the power of poetry and prayer in order to offer the Jewish people, who lamented their minority status and weaker position in society, a degree of hope and even pride in their prayerful faith traditions. The *Ashkenazic piyyut*, poetic liturgical prayer tradition, provided the Jews a means by which to counter the outside forces of another compelling faith tradition. By examining both together, Heil reveals that surprising prayerful interactions are available to be discovered if scholars will only look.

Prayers in Books

Susan Boynton in her "The *Libelli Precum* in the Central Middle Ages" skillfully lays out how scholars in the past have viewed prayerbook manuscripts, known as the *libellus precum*, which were collections of prayers. Scholarly attitudes about the types of prayers collected into manuscripts have created different interpretive schools. Boynton, by being aware of her methodology and by closely rereading the prayerful texts in their original contexts, helps to broaden scholarly approaches to these important treasure troves of information concerning medieval spirituality. The selected texts stored in these ancient manuscripts reveal much about attitudes towards prayer, which can be seen to encompass a wide variety of genres: prayers, hymns, abbreviated Psalters, confessions, and set of liturgical texts to recite during the specific hours of the divine office, along with selective psalms. While previous scholars tended to argue that liturgical and private prayer were distinct types of

devotional expressions, Boynton points out how the ancient manuscripts also show that medieval scholars and probably ordinary Christians would not have made these distinctions in so clear a manner. Indeed, categorizing prayers into types is essentially an academic enterprise; scholars need to be clear and logical in their approach to prayer as an historical source in a way that ordinary practitioners would have found tedious or distracting. The line between carefully crafted prayers of the liturgy and personal private expressions of prayer blurs when one realizes how the faithful carry away from liturgical settings a memory of liturgical prayers, or actual books with such prayers in them. Boynton keenly observes that the *libellus precum* does not distinguish between private and liturgical. Boynton also does future scholarship a great service by offering invaluable appendices with her article.

Following along the lines of Boynton is Roger Wieck's article on "Prayer for the People: The Book of Hours." Wieck's points out that during the later parts of the middle ages, books concerning prayer became remarkably popular. People utilizing these books and written prayers, or hours as they were called, finally felt that they had access to a prayer life that many admired, namely monastic prayer. The revolution of the production of prayer books for the laity, especially focused on prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mother (BVM), helped shape religious piety in a direction that Anselm had started in his day, when he pointed to the BVM with remarkable respect. At this point Wieck's article clearly connects with and recalls Ward's work on Anselm. Wieck suggests that the way to analyze prayer from the point of view of a book of prayer demands a skill that is focused on an interdisciplinary approach that takes seriously art studies, textual analysis, and historical scrutiny. A close examination of "Books of Hours" says Wieck reveals that women were instrumental in developing the books and art form of books of hours. Similarly the art of these books reflected the art in the churches of the day. Hence when someone owned a book such as these they also somehow bridged two key aspects of the Christian faith, namely hours that the monastics prayed and art that was remarkably similar to that of churches. In the books of hours the laity were able to take with them pieces of their present day spirituality that they solemnly admired. The "Books of Hours" thus were portable religious devotional art, prayer, and model devotional practices. Likewise the books mirrored the liturgy of the church as well. In the end, the home was linked to church and monastery through the book which taught the laity to pray the way the religious prayed. Books of Hours also included calendars

and lists of saint's days so that the devout might know the religious significance of a particular day. The books helped people not only keep their prayerful bearings, but also their daily schedule organized, and thus became a key ordering principle of regular life. Some even helped people locate Sunday, what day the moon would be full, when Easter would be, one's zodiac sign, and even more. The books were also geographically specific and intended to include the local saints of a particular area like London, Paris, or Rome for example. But perhaps most important of all, Books of Hours, says Wieck, remind modern scholars how people read the scriptures during the middle ages. Not only did they read them for the stories, for the content, the morals, and instructions concerning life, but they read them to pray them. The scriptures inspired the imagination of individuals and moved them to see in biblical texts as lessons that inspired prayer. Wieck notes that contrary to many modern views of prayers, the repetition and sameness of such petitions was clearly a comfort to those who used them. The words fell off their lips lightly and easily in times of trouble and joy, but either way such books aided the faithful in being the person they wanted to be before their God in the world.

Conclusion

Modern scholars indeed face an intimidating task if they desire to come to some sort of consensus surrounding the definition, character, and interpretation of prayer, in particular if the focus is upon the first to the fifteenth centuries. Only an effort of scholarly collaboration across a variety of disciplines will be able to begin to make sense of prayer, one of the most universal practices of humankind. Many of the authors within this volume have faith traditions which they belong to and which no doubt affect how they read the texts. Many of these scholars pray themselves and find prayer central to their own lives as people of faith. Nevertheless this book is an attempt at distance, an effort at looking intimately, carefully, and in a pointedly scholarly manner at prayer through the lenses of academic study in the hope that the effort will reveal much about the spirituality as well as religious practices and thought. Such a study connects with and builds upon previous scholarship and encourages more work in the future. A number of worthy areas of future pursuit are plainly laid out in this work.

Perhaps in a scientifically-minded modern world, prayer itself seems in the end to be a triviality, a superstitious enterprise, and an area

unworthy of scholarly effort. To some prayer can be seen as an utter act of foolishness, and yet for faithful people of yesteryear it was not only the highest act of sanity, but the highest form of reasonable thought and action. Indeed, prayer was so significant a force in the lives of the ancients that it often could not be separated from any other act of piety, and that included philosophy or deep theological reflection. Hence, prayer permeated every aspect of society. As a result, modern scholarship requires a broad-based interdisciplinary approach to the study of prayer. By examining the contexts, forms, practices, and content of prayers from the time of Jesus down to the Reformation, this volume is able to reveal much of what the ancients thought and believed and how these views changed over time. To overlook the historical prayerful consciousness of the Mediterranean is nothing other than to ignore the context, form, practice, and content of religious faith, thought, and life itself. The study of prayer, however, allows the modern reader to come face to face with those who defined themselves as people of faith. More recently Jürgen Moltmann has noted that he believes that prayer is both the school of hope and a school of faith. He notes, "Prayer is always linked with waking up to the world of God and the awakening of all the senses. In prayer we hear and speak, in watching we open our eyes and all our senses for the arrival of God in our life and the world."[13] Whereas Moltmann goes on to conclude that such an awakening moves people to social justice, earlier writers before the Reformation would have not only agreed with this point but they also would have included the idea that the awakening includes every aspect of life, even what they considered to be scientific knowledge. People of prayer, who are the focus of this volume, were people who were able to make sense of the world around them, and even God, because they prayed. Prayer was indeed their school for hope, faith, and thought. Prayer was the highest form of reason and the simplest expression of devotion, all in one. Prayer is spirituality, as Benedicta Ward has noted, hence, by studying prayer, the scholar studies the world, both physical and metaphysical, as the people of old saw it. As a result, modern scholars have little hope of understanding their forbearers if they cannot understand that act which was at the core of their consciousness, namely prayer.

[13] Jürgen Moltmann, "Horizons of Hope: A Critique of 'Spe Salvi,'" *Christian Century* Vol. 125, no. 10 (May 20, 2008), pp. 32f.

SECTION 1

PRAYER DURING THE FIRST TO THE FOURTH CENTURY

CHAPTER ONE

PRAYER IN THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES A.D.

L. Edward Phillips

Prayer, broadly construed, is a virtually universal religious phenomenon, and the fact that the early Christians prayed hardly distinguishes them within the Greco-Roman matrix of the first four centuries of the Common Era. Christian prayer, consequently, exhibits a great deal of continuity with prior religious cultures. Since Christianity arises as a sub-sect within first century Judaism, Jewish practices are especially significant for the background to early Christian prayer. Prayer, both private and communal, is fundamentally a ritual activity, and ritual is resistant to change, especially on the levels of physical gesture and daily pattern.[1] A great deal of Christian prayer will remain discernibly Jewish in gesture and pattern throughout this period. On the level of meaning, however, Christian prayer exhibits a great deal of quite rapid evolution. Indeed, the specifics of early Christian prayer suggest contours of the development of distinctively Christian understandings of God (as Trinity, for example) and the church (as the Body of Christ).

The Pattern of Daily Prayer

The first Christians took to heart Paul's admonition to "Pray without ceasing," and did not limit either the times or places for its observance. Clement of Alexandria remarks that the wise Christian "prays throughout his whole life, endeavoring by prayer to have fellowship with God," and further comments, "Each place, then, and time in which we entertain the idea of God, is in reality sacred."[2] And yet, Christians as early as the New Testament period were inclined to mark the life of ceaseless prayer according to specific times of the day. Luke records that Peter received a vision during prayer at noon (Acts 10:9ff.) and that

[1] For a discussion of the importance of ritual pattern in constructing the origins of Christianity see Étienne Nodet and Justin Taylor, *The Origins of Christianity: An Exploration* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1998).

[2] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7. Trans., *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2.

Peter and John went to the Temple to pray at the ninth hour of the day (Acts 3:1). Furthermore, while unambiguous evidence of Christians gathering for a daily prayer office does not appear until the fourth century, there are indications in the historical witnesses that this impulse is present earlier in descriptions of private prayer at set hours. Much of the recent historical work on the liturgy of the hours has continued to investigate the possible Jewish origins of the daily prayer pattern, as well as to refine our understanding of the development of the public celebrations of morning and evening prayer in fourth century, which Anton Baumstark labeled the "Cathedral Office."[3]

Jewish Antecedents

In the first half of the twentieth century, scholarship focused largely on the development of the liturgical office of daily prayer. The conventional theory proposed that while private prayer at fixed times may have been a feature of the early church, the prayer offices as such did not develop until after Constantine. Consequently, there was little need to investigate possible Jewish roots for the daily office, the church's split with the synagogue having been in effect for centuries. In 1944, C. W. Dugmore published an important challenge to this approach, arguing that the early Christians observed communal prayer at dawn and evening, which was a continuation of a pattern of daily morning and evening prayer inherited from the Jewish synagogue, which was in turn based on the pattern of the morning and evening sacrifices in the Jerusalem Temple.[4] Though Dugmore's work was initially very influential, in recent years it has not found wide acceptance. Roger Beckwith, to cite one example, has refuted Dugmore's thesis concerning daily prayer in the synagogue. Beckwith notes that the Mishnah (ca. 200 A.D.) records the corporate gatherings for prayer on the Sabbath, and in some synagogues on Mondays and Thursdays, but not for each day of the week, as Dugmore supposed.[5] Many other scholars, both Jewish and Christian, now acknowledge that there is little evidence for public daily prayer in the first century synagogues, either in Palestine or in the Diaspora.[6]

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[3] *Comparative Liturgy*, English edition by F. L. Cross (London, 1958), p. 112.

[4] C. W. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office* (London, 1944; reprint, London, 1964 [Alcuin Club Collections 45]), p. 43.

[5] Roger Beckwith, *Daily and Weekly Worship: Jewish to Christian* (Bramcote, 1987), p. 11. See *m. Megillah* 1:3; 3:6–4:1.

[6] Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship* (New York, 1992), p. 24.

A problem with Dugmore's approach is that much of the evidence he finds for institutionalized Jewish prayer in the synagogue comes from second century Mishnaic or even later Talmudic sources, when standardization of prayer becomes apparent. Yet, such standardization was not the case for first century Judaism. With a number of diverse Jewish groups very active and influential in regard to religious practice to varying degress—Pharisees and Sadducees, as well at the Therapeutae of Egypt and the Essenes of Qumran and elsewhere, *and* Galillean Jews with whom Jesus seems to identify—the situation was much more complex than Dugmore had assumed.[7]

For Jerusalem and its environs, the primary location of public worship was the Temple. While synagogues per se may not have been a gathering place for daily public prayer, the Jews of Jerusalem did observe an instituted morning and evening prayer service in the Temple that was performed at the times of the daily sacrifices.[8] In addition to prayer at the Temple, Jews prayed at home, privately or with their families. These Jewish private prayers would have included the recitation of the *Shema*, which is construed even in the Mishnah as a private rather than public obligation.[9] In short, the evidence suggests that were two "centers" of prayer in the environs of Jerusalem: public prayer in the Temple and private prayer at home.

The Temple cult in Jerusalem, however, does not represent the whole picture for communal prayer, even in Palestine. Recent developments in scholarship on the liturgical materials in the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, have yet to be fully investigated by Jewish and Christian liturgical scholars. When the scrolls first came to public attention in the mid-twentieth century, a few liturgical scholars began to consider the evidence from Qumran as it became available.[10] Nevertheless, it was widely assumed that the Covenanters of Qumran represented a very marginalized sect with liturgical practices that were irrelevant for

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Indeed, Shemaryahu Talmon has suggested that the absence of the text of any public prayers in early rabbinic sources indicates a suppression of institutionalized prayer. See "The Emergence of Institutionalized Prayer in Israel" in *The Word of Qumran from Within* (Leiden, 1992), pp. 207–8.

[7] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1986), p. 6.

[8] Acts 3:1.

[9] Daniel K. Falk, "Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church," in Richard Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting*, (Grand Rapids, 1995), p. 296.

[10] J. A. Jungmann, "Altchristliche Gebetsordnung im Lichte des Rebelbuches on "En Fescha," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* (1952), 215–219.

the early church as it developed within mainstream Judaism. As the full corpus of literature discovered in the Judean desert has come to light, this assumption is no longer valid. On the contrary, some of the literature, such as the numerous biblical texts found among the scrolls, is obviously not sectarian. Furthermore, a good bit of the other, non-biblical material does not exhibit any sectarian features, and some texts which do have sectarian features appear to be adapted from sources which otherwise appear quite "mainstream," or at least, not peculiar to Qumran.[11] There is a growing acknowledgement among scholars that the Dead Sea Scrolls preserve texts which may be used with care as examples of Jewish life beyond the Qumran sect.[12]

In contrast to the scant evidence for a fixed order of prayer in the synagogues of the first century, the Qumran community clearly instituted communal prayer at set times during the day.[13] As evidence for the Qumran office, Paul Bradshaw cites 1*QS* 10.1–3a (and its parallel 1*QH* 12.4–7) the so-called "Psalm of Appointed Time," which seems to describe a cycle of daily prayer:

> At the commencement of the dominion of light,
> during its rotation
> and when retired to its appointed abode.
> At the commencement of the vigils of darkness…
> and in his rotation
> and when it retires before the light.[14]

In an earlier investigation of prayer at Qumran, Shemaryahu Talmon interpreted this passage as illustrating a prayer cycle of *six* times of daily prayer, three for the day after the pattern of Daniel 6:10, and three at night. Bradshaw has revised Talmon's theory to show a pattern of *four* hours, morning, noon, evening and midnight, by proposing that the beginning and ending of day/night overlap in the cycle.

Bradshaw's proposal is not without difficulties. The Qumran scrolls provide texts of prayers to be said morning and evening, but there are

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[11] For example, the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. See C. A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta, 1985). See also her wonderfully titled essay, "sectually Explicit Literature from Qumran," in W. H. Propp, B. Halpern and D. N. Freedman (eds.), *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters* (Winona Lake, Indiana, 1990), pp. 167–187.

[12] Esther G. Chazon, "Hymns and Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in P. W. Flint and J. C. Vanderkam (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years* (Leiden, 1998), p. 249.

[13] Paul Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church* (New York, 1982), pp. 4–11.

[14] 1QS 10.1–2. Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, trans. by Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden, 1994), p. 14.

no prayers for noon or night. While there is some evidence for Jewish prayer at noon (Bradshaw cites 2 Enoch 51:4 and Daniel 6:10), the supporting evidence is rather circumstantial (was 2 Enoch, for example, written before or after 70 A.D.?). Daniel Falk, therefore, argues that 1 *QS* 10.1–3a does not refer to six or even four hours of prayer, but, rather, employs poetical repetition to describe a simple two-fold pattern of morning and evening prayer for which the scrolls provide prayer texts.[15]

Regarding prayer in the night, however, the scrolls do give evidence in1 *QS* 6.7–8a: "And the many shall be on watch together for a third of each night of the year in order to read the book, explain the regulation, and bless together."[16] Moreover, this description from the Qumran corpus corresponds to evidence for a Jewish night office in Josephus' description of Essenes (obviously not from Qumran!) in the "slavonic" version of his *Jewish Wars*: "They rest little; at night they rise for singing, praising God and praying…"[17] Yet, though the Qumran community observed a nightly vigil, no prayer texts for this vigil survive. Thus, if the absence of texts for prayers at noon is a problem for Bradshaw's hypothesis (as Falk argues) then one would need to explain the absence of prayer texts for night prayer. The absence of prayer texts for the night vigil implies that the lack of texts for prayer at noon is *not* a fatal flaw in Bradshaw's theory regarding a four-fold daily office at Qumran.

It is significant for the development of early Christian prayer that the prayer texts found at Qumran demonstrate the existence of daily prayer which functioned as a liturgical alternative to the Temple sacrifices, during the period in which the Temple was still standing.[18] Moreover, as Esther Chazon has argued, there are parallels between the Qumran texts and latter rabbinic prayers, which demonstrate that prayers of

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[15] Daniel K. Falk, "Jewish Prayer Literature and the Jerusalem Church," in Richard Bauckham (ed.), *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting*, (Grand Rapids, 1995), p. 295. See also, D. F. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 105–6.

[16] Martínez, *Dead Sea Scrolls* p. 9. See Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, p. 7.

[17] Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, p. 121. The quotation he cites is from A. Rubinstein, "The Essenes According to the Slavonic Version of Josephus *Wars*," *Vetus Testamentum* 6 (1956), 307–8.

[18] This suggests that Dugmore was not entirely off base to propose a first century Jewish pattern of morning and evening public prayer. Furthermore, if Esther Chazon is correct in her assessment that the collections of prayers for the daily office at Qumran did not originate at Qumran, but came from outside that community, then "we have here our first direct evidence of fixed public prayer outside of Qumran during the Second Temple period." See Esther G. Chazon, "Prayers from Qumran and their Historical Implications," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 1 (1994), p. 284.

the type found at Qumran "were considered important enough to be incorporated into the liturgy that was institutionalized by the Rabbis,"[19] which suggests a wider use for these prayers even in the first century. Nevertheless, there remains a significant difference with regard to the times of prayer between Qumran and the Temple. The Qumran sect observed prayer according to the rising and setting of the sun. The official Temple cult, on the other hand, made the morning sacrifice somewhat later in the morning (just how late is not certain), and made the evening sacrifice at three in the afternoon (the ninth hour of the day).[20] Thus, in addition to our evidence of two types of prayer, communal and private, we find evidence of two systems of public prayer: the Temple system connected a twice daily recitation of a prayer (an early form of the *Tefillah?*) directly to the sacrifices, and the Qumran system, which connected prayer to the "course of the luminaries" (i.e., the rising and setting of the sun), and which also had a vigil in the night, and, possibly another prayer in the middle of the day.[21]

To complicate the picture even further, the Qumran literature provides evidence of more than one liturgical system: blessings for each day of a month (4*Q* 503) and a liturgy for each day of the week (4*Q* 504–506), and also private and communal thanksgiving hymns (1*QH*$^{a-b}$; 4*QH*$^{a-f}$) that may have been used at the daily services. The existence of these overlapping systems of public and private prayers, blessings and thanksgivings, in a single community such as Qumran, suggests that we should expect to find some conflation of originally distinct patterns.

Just such a conflation of patterns would seem to underlie rabbinic daily prayer which joins a twice daily recitation of the *Shema* and its benedictions, morning and evening, with a thrice daily recitation of the *Tefillah* (morning, afternoon, and evening). Tzvee Zahavy has identified two distinct origins for this pattern, with the *Shema* arising among the scribes and the *Tefillah* with the temple priesthood which were combined no earlier than the time of Rabbi Gamaliel in the first century A.D.[22] Later rabbinic practice is clear that the morning and evening *Shema* is

[19] Esther G. Chazon, "Hymns and Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in P. W. Flint and J. C. Vanderkam (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years* (Leiden, 1998), p. 257.

[20] For the evidence, see Beckwith, *Daily and Weekly Worship*, p. 13.

[21] Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, p. 47.

[22] "The Politics of Piety: Social Conflict and the Emergence of Rabbinic Liturgy" in Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffmann, eds., *The Making of Jewish and Christian Worship* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1991), pp. 42–68. For an assessment of this argument see Alistair Steweart-Sykes, "Prayer Five Times in the Day and at Midnight: Two Apostolic Customs," *Studia Liturgica* 33 (2003), pp. 2–6.

said with the morning and evening *Tefillah*, while the afternoon *Tefillah* is recited by itself. While there is little direct evidence of this particular combined pattern in early Christian prayer, it is quite possible that something of the earlier, distinct patterns have left their traces, with Rabbinic Judaism and the early church combining the two systems in different ways.[23]

First-century Palestinian Christians, then, probably knew a variety of patterns of daily private and communal prayer, and the practice of praying at fixed times during each day has several Jewish antecedents.

Daily Patterns in Early Christian Prayer

As noted above, the conventional theory for the development of the cursus of daily prayer, most thoroughly set out by Dugmore,[24] is that the earliest Christian horarium consisted of morning and evening prayer taken from the synagogue. To this supposed Jewish pattern, the church in the late second century added prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours (*terce, sext*, and *none*), yielding a five fold pattern for the day. This theory can no longer be accepted without qualification.

Indeed, the earliest clear description of Christian practice, found in *Didache* 8.3, offers a *three-fold* daily pattern for the recitation of the Lord's Prayer. While the *Didache* does not specify the hours of prayer, Joan H. Walker, in a careful analysis of patristic evidence, proposed that this original Christian horarium observed prayer at *terce, sext*, and *none*.[25] Walker further suggested that the origins of these hours are distinctly Christian and are based on the Markan chronology of the crucifixion. She cites *Apostolic Tradition* 41 as evidence for the early Christian association of the day hours with the hours of the crucifixion.[26] Bradshaw has offered another reading of early patristic evidence, especially the evidence from Alexandria, to suggest that the earliest daily prayer pattern was morning, noon, evening, and during the night (the pattern he finds at Qumran), but allowing that Walker is correct in identifying the Markan crucifixion narrative as a source for the "secondary hours" of *terce, sext*, and *none*.[27]

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[23] Steward-Sykes, "Prayer Five Times," pp. 17–20.

[24] Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*, pp. 10, 47, 70, 112.

[25] J. H. Walker, "Terce, Sext, and None, and Apostolic Custom?" *Studia Patristica* V (1962), 206–12.

[26] Walker, Terce, Sext, and None" p. 210. See discussion of the so-called *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* below.

[27] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church*, pp. 47–9; 61ff.

The evidence for daily prayer in the pre-Constantinian church is well established, but, similar to the evidence of Jewish prayer, it is open to various interpretations. Clement of Alexandria, around the year 200 C.E. specifically notes these day hours in the *Stromata*: "Now, if some assign definite hours for prayer—as, for example, the third, and sixth, and ninth—yet the gnostic prays through his whole life, endeavoring by prayer to have fellowship with God."[28] But, Clement, unlike *Apostolic Tradition* 41, connects these three hours of prayer with the Trinity: "But the distribution of the hours into a threefold division, honored with as many prayers, those who know the blessed triad are acquainted with."[29] Clement also mentions prayer at various other times, especially at meals: "His [the gnostic's] sacrifices are prayer, and praise, and readings in the Scriptures before meals, and psalms and hymns during meals and before bed, and prayers again during the night."[30] Bradshaw specifically cites this passage as evidence that Clement intends a pattern of morning, noon, and evening prayer corresponding to the three daily mealtimes.[31] Yet, the goal for the "gnostic," (the "mature Christian" in Clement's terminology) is to be in a prayerful disposition in all things: "But while engaged in walking, in conversation, while in silence, while engaged in reading and in works according to reason, he in every mood prays."[32] In other words, according to Clement, the ordinary Christian may pray at fixed times, but the especially pious Christian will go far behind these required hours. It is significant, therefore, that the only specific hours given by Clement, and presumably those practiced by the typical Christian in Alexandria are *terce*, *sext*, and *none*.

Origen, likewise, states that prayer must be made at least three times each day:

> Of such prayer (i.e., prayer without ceasing), part is what is usually called "prayer," and ought not to be performed less than three time each day. This is clear from the practice of Daniel, who, when great danger threatened him, prayed three times a day (Dan. 6:10). And Peter, going up to the housetop to pray about the sixth hour, at which time also he saw the vessel let down from heaven, let down by the four corners (Acts 10:9–11), gives an example of the middle of the three times of prayer spoken of by David before him: In the morning thou shalt hear my prayer;

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[28] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.40.3.
[29] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.40.3.
[30] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.49.4.
[31] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, p. 48.
[32] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.49.7.

> in the morning will I stand beside thee, and well look unto thee" (Psalm 5:3). The last of these three is indicated in the words, "The lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141.2). But not even the time of night shall we rightly pass without such prayer, for David says, At midnight I rose to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments (Psalm 119:62), and Paul, as related in the Acts of the Apostles, at midnight together with Silas at Philippi prayed and sang praises unto God, so that the prisoners also heard them (Acts 16:25).[33]

Origen cites no specific warrant other than Daniel for the first hour of prayer. He connects the middle of the three times to Peter's prayer on the roof at noon in Acts 10:9, but also to David's prayer in the morning mentioned in Psalm 5:3, which seems somewhat ambiguous.[34] The last of the day hours is connected to the "evening sacrifice" of Psalm 141:2. Dugmore[35] and Walker[36] propose that since Origen explicitly connects the middle time of prayer to the sixth hour, he must intend the other two times of prayer to be the third and ninth hours. Bradshaw offers an alternative interpretation that since Origen connects the last of the hours to the evening sacrifice of Psalm 141:2, he must intend this to be evening prayer. If this is the case with Origen, Bradshaw concludes, there is no reason to connect the first and third times of day prayer to the third and ninth hours of the day. The first and third times of prayer for Origen would be morning and evening prayer, rather than *terce* and *none*. Yet, Origen goes on to call for prayer even in the middle of the night, which, as Bradshaw notes, would add up to *four* times rather than Daniel's *three* times of prayer each day.[37] On the other hand, Eric Jay suggested that Origen only refers to three times of prayer, and that Origen's biblical references to night prayer are actually meant to be the warrants for the first of Daniel's three hours of prayer.[38] However, in a passage in *Contra Celsus* (cited by Bradshaw) Origen appears

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[33] Origen, *De oratione* 12.2., trans. from Eric G. Jay, *Origen's Treatise on Prayer* (London, 1954), p. 115. Origen probably wrote this treatise while at Caesarea about the year 236 C.E. Since, however, Origen was Clement's successor at the catechetical school in Alexandria, it is generally assumed that he reflects the practice of Egypt. Regarding the date, see Jay, p. 72.

[34] Origen, however, says nothing of a specific hour of prayer at noon in *Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum* 2.4 where explains at some length the meaning of "mid-day" in the Canticle.

[35] Dugmore, *Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*, pp. 67–8.

[36] Walker, "Terce, Sext, and None," p. 209.

[37] This pattern is reminiscent of the four-fold pattern Bradshaw finds at Qumran.

[38] Jay, *Origen's Treatise on Prayer*, pp. 115–6, n. 3.

to distinguish the day and night prayers,[39] and it is noteworthy that Origen in this passage calls for prayer "not *less* than three times each day." Contrary to Jay's reading, therefore, prayer at midnight would seem to be a distinct time of daily prayer, and the pattern in Origen is prayer morning, noon, evening, and midnight.[40]

Origen's reference to Daniel 6:10 is especially significant since the contemporaneous evidence from north Africa also cites Daniel. Tertullian, writing about the same time (200 C.E.) in northern Africa describes the hours of prayer:

> Touching the time, however, the extrinsic observance of certain hours will not be unprofitable—those common hours, I mean, which mark the intervals of the day—the third, the sixth, the ninth—which we may find in the Scriptures to have been more solemn than the rest. The first infusion of the Holy Spirit into the congregated disciples took place at "the third hour." Peter, on the day on which he experienced the vision of Universal Community, (exhibited) in that small vessel, had ascended into the more lofty parts of the house, for prayer's sake "at the sixth hour." The same (apostle) was going into the temple, with John, "at the ninth hour, "when he restored the paralytic to his health. Albeit these practices stand simply without any precept for their observance, still it may be granted a good thing to establish some definite presumption, which may both add stringency to the admonition to, pray, and may, as it were by a law, tear us out from our businesses unto such a duty; so that—what we read to have been observed by Daniel also, in accordance (of course) with Israel's discipline—we pray at least not less than thrice in the day, debtors as we are to Three—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: of course, in addition to our regular prayers which are due, without any admonition, on the entrance of light and of night. But, withal, it becomes believers not to take food, and not to go to the bath, before interposing a prayer; for the refreshments and nourishments of the spirit are to be held prior to those of the flesh, and things heavenly prior to things earthly.[41]

Tertullian states that the "regular" prayers "are due, without any admonition, on the entrance of light and of night." That is to say, they are the natural, or logical, times when the Christian will pray. He exerts considerably more effort defending the observance of the day hours of *terce, sext*, and *none.* He notes that these hours "mark the intervals of the day."[42] Furthermore, these hours have scriptural precedents even if

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[39] Origen, *Contra Celsus* 6.41.
[40] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, pp. 48–49; 62–64.
[41] Tertullian, *De oratione.* 25.
[42] Dugmore sees here a Roman civil custom in the public proclamation these

they are not mandated: the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at the third hour (Acts 2.1–4); Peter was at prayer at the sixth hour when he received the vision of the clean and unclean animals (Acts 10:9); and Peter and John went to pray at the Temple at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). Furthermore, he remarks, Daniel prayed three times during day (Daniel 6:10). Finally, these three houses of day-time prayer honor the persons of the Trinity, thus providing a theological warrant for the practice. In his treatise *On Fasting* 10, Tertullian again cites the scriptural precedents, and he calls the day hours "apostolic," meaning, probably, that he finds reference for them in Acts. He rehearses the evidence for the day hours in his defense of prolonged fasting. The "Catholics" of North Africa say that fasting should not continue beyond the ninth hour since Peter went to the Temple to pray at that hour. Tertullian agrees that Peter observed the ninth hour, but he proposes that among the Montanists a more worthy reason is given for the honoring of this hour, namely, that this is the hour of Christ's death. The evidence from Tertullian, therefore, clearly supports prayer at *terce*, *sext*, and *none* as longstanding Christian practice along with prayer at morning and evening. We may note, furthermore, that Tertullian specifically relates Daniel 6:10 to the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day, rather than to morning, noon, and evening, which is the pattern that Bradshaw proposes for Origen.

In the mid-third century, Cyprian describes the daily prayer pattern in the North African church.[43] He connects the three prayers of Daniel to the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and also sees in this an explicit Trinitarian pattern. He cites the passages from Acts as warrants for the third and sixth hours, and, similar to Tertullian, connects the ninth hour to the crucifixion. These day hours constitute the "old sacraments" (i.e., Old Testament or Jewish practice); but, according to Cyprian, they are also the times observed by the apostolic church. He goes to say that these hours have been "observed of old," but the times and sacraments "have now increased in number." The new, and specifically Christian, times of prayer are morning, as a commemoration of the resurrection,

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important hours of the day. See Dugmore, *Influence of the Synagogue upon Divine Worship*, pp. 66–68. J. H. Walker, however, has convincingly demonstrated that this was not a widespread Roman custom and could not at any rate have served as a grounds for the Christian practice of *terce*, *sext*, and *none*. See Walker, "Terce, Sext, and None," pp. 206–12.

[43] Cyprian, *De Dominica oratione* 34–5.

and sunset, to honor Christ as the "true sun and true day." To this he later adds a reference to prayer during the night, "Let not us, then who are in Christ—that is, always in the light—cease from prayer even during night."[44]

To summarize: Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian all employ Daniel 6:10 as a biblical precedent for prayer during the day.[45] Tertullian and Cyprian specifically link this Daniel's prayers with the third, sixth, and ninth hours. Clement does not cite Daniel, but he does indicate that the third, sixth, and ninth hours were the standard hours of prayer for the day. Origen connects the middle of Daniel's prayers with the sixth hour. The parallel evidence, therefore, would suggest that Origen also understood the first and last of these day prayer to be at the third and ninth hours. As noted above, Bradshaw has argued that the last time of day prayer for Origen must be *evening* because Origen cites Psalm 141:2—"Let my prayers rise like incense, my hands like the *evening sacrifice*." Yet, Josephus records that in the first century, the evening sacrifice was held at the *ninth hour* of the day, rather than later in the evening.[46] Origen was acquainted with the works of Josephus and may well have known that the hour of the evening sacrifice was three o'clock in the afternoon. Therefore, even if Origen construed the third day hour to be *evening* prayer, he could still have connected it to the *ninth* hour of the day.[47]

It is significant that Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian each cite Daniel 6:10 as precedent for the day hours in their treatises on the Lord's Prayer. Perhaps, therefore, Walker is correct in her suggestion that the *Didache* 8.3 (the instruction to pray the Lord's Prayer "three times each day") is evidence for an apostolic pattern of prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day.

The evidence of the *Apostolic Tradition*, in light of what can be determined about early Jewish patterns of prayer, however, would suggest that Walker is too hasty in her dismissal of Jewish influence on this Christian pattern, for that text does show traces of continuing Jewish influence in its descriptions of the day hours. Here is the relevant text:[48]

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[44] Cyprian, *De Dominica oratione* 36.

[45] Hippolytus, unfortunately, does not mention times for prayer in his commentary on this passage, *Commentarium in Danielem* 4.20ff.

[46] Josephus, *Antiquities*, 14:65.

[47] Though Steward-Sykes suggests the evidence for this is weak. See his *Tertullian, Cyprian and Origen, On the Lord's Prayer* (Crestwood, New York, 2004) p. 108.

[48] Walker, "Terce, Sext, and None," p. 210.

> (41.5) And if you are in your house, pray at about the third hour and bless God. If on the other hand you are in another place and you happen upon that time, pray in your heart to God.
>
> (6) For in that hour the Christ was seen nailed to the wood. Because of this, also, the old law commanded that they offer shewbread at every hour as type of the body and the blood of the Christ with the slaughter of the senseless sheep, this being a type of the perfect sheep. For the shepherd is the Christ. He also is the bread which came down from heaven.
>
> (7) Pray also at about the sixth hour, for after Christ was hung on the wood of the cross, that day divided and a great darkness happened. Likewise at that hour, let a prayer which is powerful be prayed, being compared to the voice of the one who prayed, [and] he caused all creation to become dark for the unbelieving Jews.
>
> (8) Let a great prayer and a great blessing be prayed at about the ninth hour, so that you shall know the way in which the soul of the righteous blesses the Lord, the true God. This one, who remembered those who are holy, sent his son to them, who is his word, to shine on them.
>
> (9) For at that hour, they pierced the Christ in his rib by a spear. Blood and water came out, and afterward he brought light to the rest of the day, until evening. Because of this, you also, when you go to sleep, shall begin another day and make the type of the resurrection.[49]

Notably, the *Apostolic Tradition* makes no mention of Daniel 6:10 as justification for these hours. Rather, the hours seemed to be fixed according to the Markan chronology of the crucifixion (as Walker correctly observes). The reference to the shewbread for the third hour is something of an enigma, but the theme the offering of Christ as a type of the sacrificial lamb suggests a connection to the morning sacrifice in the Temple. Arguably, this sacrificial imagery also prevails in the description of prayer at the ninth hour with the description of the piercing of Christ's side.[50]

According to the Jerusalem Talmud, Jews connected two of the thrice daily recitations of the *Tefillah* (the Eighteen Benedictions) with the times of the morning and evening sacrifices in the Temple, and the connection must surely have been much earlier than the editing of the

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[49] The translation here is from the Sahidic Coptic version of the *Apostolic Tradition*, which in this section is more complete than the Latin version. See Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson and L. Edward Phillips, *The Apostolic Tradition: a Commentary* (Minneapolis, 2002), pp. 194–210.

[50] Alistair Stewart-Sykes, on the other hand, argues that the biblical theology here is not Markan, but thoroughly Johannine. See *On the Apostolic Tradition* (Crestwood, 2001), p. 168.

Talmud.[51] By the first century C.E., the morning offering has been moved around the fourth hour of the day,[52] and the rabbis disputed the hour for the corresponding morning prayer. *Mishnah Berahot* 4.1 states that the morning prayer may be given until midday, though R. Judah states "Until four hours." The Jerusalem Talmud cites R. Yasa and R. Hiyya bar Abba who would pray at the third hour.

Furthermore, as Josephus notes, the evening offering was made at the ninth hour,[53] and the rabbis similarly disputed the precise hour of the corresponding prayer. So strong is the association the *Tefillah* with the daily sacrifices that the Rabbis suggested that the evening prayer might be optional since there is no sacrifice made at night.[54] Yet, the connection of morning and evening prayer to the Temple sacrifice is not limited to Jerusalem or to the later Rabbinic tradition. As noted above, the Qumran community followed a pattern of twice daily prayer, morning and late afternoon (evening), in connection with the tradition of the Temple sacrifices.[55]

In addition to the sacrifice and offering imagery of the day hours, there is another connection between the Jewish pattern of daily sacrifices/*Tefillah* and the *Apostolic Tradition*. The *Apostolic Tradition* alludes to the distinctively Jewish form of blessing at the third and ninth hours, just where we would expect the *Tefillah* to be said in the Jewish pattern of the daily sacrifices. Furthermore, the second of the *Tefillah's* eighteen blessing is the so-called "Benediction of the Resurrection of the Dead," which may be one of the oldest of the blessings to receive some sort of fixed content, if not fixed wording.[56] If underlying the day hours of prayer in *Apostolic Tradition* 41 were a set of Jewish blessing prayers which already included a blessing for the resurrection of the dead (i.e., the souls of the righteous), then the difficult typology connecting the

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[51] Jerusalem Talmud, *Berakoth*. 4.1.4.

[52] *Mishnah, Eduyoth*. 6.1.

[53] *Antiquities* 14:65. See also *Mishnah*, *Pes*. 5.1.

[54] Though in Jerusalem Talmud, *Berakoth* 4.1.4, R. Tanhuma shows a parallel in the burning of the fat and entrails of the daily sacrifices, which continued into the night.

[55] See Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Scrolls and Early Jewish Liturgy," in *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia, 1987), p. 37. There is nothing quite like the *Tefillah* in the Dead Sea Scrolls library. The Qumran liturgy there would appear to have a morning and evening prayer that was variable according to the day of the month. See the 4Q Daily Prayers in Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 407–410.

[56] It is mentioned in the *Mishnah*, *Berakoth* 5.2.

resurrection of Jesus to the ninth hour makes more obvious sense. The writer who added the Christian typology would not have invented the resurrection imagery, but merely given a Christological interpretation to what had been received from Jewish sources.

If the third and ninth hours of Christian prayer find their origins in the times of the Temple morning and evening sacrifices, the development of the five-fold pattern of day prayer, with an additional service in the middle of the night, probably already known to Tertullian by the early third century, can be explained through a process of the conflation of two distinct and prior Jewish patterns. One pattern, that of the Essenes, required prayer at sunrise, sunset, and midnight (and perhaps mid-day). The other pattern, justified by the story of Daniel, (and for later Christian interpreters, the chronology of the crucifixion and the times of the morning and evening Temple sacrifices), required prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours. The result of this conflation would be a six-fold pattern of prayer at sunrise, third hour, noon, ninth hour, sunset and midnight (vigils).[57]

This pattern further expanded to include prayer at bedtime and at cockcrow, both of which are traceable to fourth century Egyptian monasticism, where they were communal hours of prayer in the Pachomian Office. According to Taft, moreover, these monastic offices are functionally equivalent to morning and evening prayer, i.e., the beginning and conclusion of a day, the difference being that "monks just began the day earlier because they slept less."[58] As is the case with the earlier six-fold pattern, the addition of these hours to more general descriptions of daily prayer in the early church also occurs through a process of conflating patterns, resulting in eight discrete hours of prayer. Underlying this expanded eight-fold structure, however, there remains a pattern of prayer which seeks to fix in the Christian a life of ceaseless devotion by prayer in the morning, noon, evening and during the night.

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[57] Alistair Stewart-Sykes has proposed a similar reading of the evidence whereby a five-fold pattern of prayer results from the conflation two earlier patterns, While Stewart-Sykes offers a different analysis of the origins of the hours of *terce*, *sext* and *none* than that given above, we agree that origins for the pattern are Jewish, and that there is not one Jewish origin for this early Christian pattern, but at least two. See "Prayer Five Times," pp. 16–19.

[58] Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 65.

The Development of Christian Common Prayer

Prior to the fourth century, evidence of communal daily prayer is sparse and difficult to evaluate. For example, Tertullian suggests that Christians pray together often, though it is not clear if he is talking about weekly Eucharistic gatherings or other more frequent prayer gatherings. It is likely that Tertullian is merely describing ad hoc gatherings of Christians rather than an established daily office, for where he does describe a daily prayer cursus he makes no mention of communal gathering.[59] Origen argues that the common prayer of Christians in their meeting places is especially suited for prayer, since in common prayer the terrestrial congregation joins with the prayers of the angels and the departed saints.[60] Yet, Origen provides no hint that such communal gatherings take place daily. The *Apostolic Tradition*, in chapters 18 and 35, describes regular morning (though not daily) gatherings which conclude with communal prayer. Yet, the main purpose of these morning meetings is catechetical; they are attended by both the faithful and the catechumens for the purpose of instruction. On mornings when there is not a catechetical meeting, *Apostolic Tradition* 41 urges believers to perform their usual morning prayer at home.

The first undisputed examples of regular public daily prayer come from the fourth century with the appearance in the eastern churches of a twice daily liturgical service, attended by the faithful, under the leadership of the clergy. These public services of prayer, which, since the pioneering work of Baumstark, have been known as the "cathedral office," took place morning and evening. The distinctive features of the cathedral office include: a selective use of a standard psalmody, a focus on intercessions, and the "absence of scripture readings."[61] The monastic office of the Egyptian monks may have been the first to observe an office with morning and evening prayer in common, but the purpose for this monastic observance was the individual monk's spiritual formation, rather than on the corporate prayer of the church, as in the cathedral office.[62] There was also an "urban monastic" type of office in the eastern church, which observed communal prayer six times each complete day, and which Bradshaw has argued was a com-

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[59] Tertullian, *De oratione* 25. See Steward-Sykes, *On the Lord's Prayer*, pp. 33–37.
[60] Origen, *De oratione* 31.5.
[61] Bradshaw, *Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, p. 188.
[62] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, pp. 188–189.

munal observance of what had actually been the private practice of Christians in the third century.[63]

The pattern of morning and evening prayer in the cathedral and urban monastic offices may have been influenced by the Old Testament accounts of the temple sacrifices. But apart from this biblical justification, Taft has suggested that the times of morning and evening otherwise had no particular significance, but, rather, "expressed what ought to be the quality of the whole day."[64] In a challenge to Taft's assessment, G. Woolfenden more recently has shown that the rhythm of evening and morning, with its imagery of darkness and light, was "fundamental to the whole concept" of evening and morning prayer.[65] According to Woolfenden, vespers in the various traditions exhibits an incompleteness that is fulfilled with the celebration of Matins, which ritualized "the victory of Christ over death, symbolized by the final triumph of light over darkness." Thus, the office was not incidentally tied to morning and evening. Rather, the connection was "sacramental": "in the outward and visible signs of nature such as light and darkness, the mystery of God is experienced."[66] Though the influence would not have been direct, we may note in Woolfenden's assessment of Christian daily prayer in the church of late antiquity a parallel with the daily prayer texts at Qumran and their thankful focus on the "luminaries" as the gift of God.

Unlike the monastic offices of prayer, which used the entire psalter and numerous biblical canticles in its ascetic approach to the discipline of prayer, the cathedral office was structured so as to be very assessable to the laity. Evening prayer began with a lamp lighting ritual during which an evening hymn was sung. The *Phos hilaron* is the best known of these lamp lighting hymns.[67] While there are some Jewish parallels to this lucernarium ritual (such as the lighting of lamps on the evening of Sabbath), Taft suggests that the origin of the rites is almost certainly the general pagan practice of greeting the evening lights with

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[63] "Cathedral vs. Monastery: The Only Alternative for the Liturgy of the Hours?" in N. Alexander, ed., *Time and Community* (Washington, 1990), pp. 123–36.

[64] Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 348.

[65] Graham Woolfenden, "Daily Prayer: Its Origin in its Function," in E. A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica* 30 (Leuven, 1997), p. 364.

[66] Woolfenden, "Daily Prayer," p. 388.

[67] Gregory of Nyssa refers to the lamp lighting hymn in his *Life of St. Macrina.* See Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 36. Basil, in his treatise *On the Holy Spirit* 73, quotes part of the *Phos hilaron* in his defense of the coordinate trinitarian doxology.

an acclamation.[68] The standard psalm for the evening service, at least in the eastern churches, was Psalm 141, with the evocative line, "My prayers rise like incense; my hands like the evening sacrifice."[69] The service also included bidding prayers led by a deacon, a prayer for a peaceful night, and a thanksgiving.[70] The morning prayer included Psalms 148–50 and in some locations also Psalms 63 and 51.[71] In some places, the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* was recited.[72]

There is some evidence that cathedral vespers could include scripture readings (notably in Egypt) and even a sermon or lecture.[73] Nevertheless, it is clear that the core of the cathedral office, both evening and morning, was prayer and the chanting of fixed psalmody, rather lessons and preaching.

The Gestures and Postures of Early Christian Prayer

While it is customary to consider prayer as a mental and or verbal activity, prayer is typically accompanied by ritual gestures and postures. Many of the ritual gestures of prayer almost certainly developed locally, but the sources also describe some rather wide-spread practices that demonstrate at least regional consistency.

Standing/Kneeling

The typical Jewish posture for prayer is to stand.[74] This is assumed in the *Mishnah*, though it is not, strictly speaking, required.[75] Kneeling during

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[68] *Liturgy of the Hours*, p. 37. Taft notes that Tertullian's accusation in *Ad nationes* 1:13 that the pagans stole this rite from the Jews is almost certainly wrong.

[69] For example, *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.59, which also recommends Psalm 63 for the morning prayer.

[70] An outline of such an evening service can be found in *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.35, 36, 37.VIII.xxxv–xxxvii.

[71] Bradshaw, *Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, p. 173.

[72] *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.47.

[73] In the Lenten sermon *In Genesis sermo* 4.3, John Chrysostom chastises his congregation for not paying attention to the sermon during the lamp lighting. Still, as Taft notes, it is possible that this was a catechetical lecture given before the actual prayer service. By the mid-fifth century, however, Socrates of Constantinople refers to catechetical lectures given by priests and bishops at the lamp lighting (*Church History* V.xxii.). See Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, pp. 39, 43.

[74] Luke 18:9–14; Mark 11:25; Matthew 6:5.

[75] See, for example, *Berakoth* 3.5: "If he was standing during the *Tefillah* and then

prayer, on the other hand, is ordinarily a strong sign of repentance or distress. Thus, Luke depicts Jesus kneeling to pray on the night of his arrest (Luke 22:41). In Acts, Luke also describes Stephen kneeling to pray after his stoning (Acts 7:60, for obvious reasons); Peter kneeling in prayer at the bedside of Tabitha; and Paul kneeling to pray with church leaders in Ephesus (Acts 20:36) and Tyre (Acts 21:5).

In the late second century, Clement of Alexandria alludes to standing during prayer. However, since Clement also counsels prayer to be said continually in all daily activity, it is not certain that he intends standing to have preference over other postures.[76] Tertullian is the first authority to discuss the appropriateness of standing or kneeling during prayer. In *De corona* 3, he asserts that kneeling (along with fasting) is prohibited on the Lord's Day. In *De oratione* 23 he comments at some length on appropriate posture:

> In the matter of kneeling also, prayer is subject to diversity of observance, through the act of some few who abstain from kneeling on the Sabbath; and since this dissension is particularly on its trial before the churches, the Lord will give His grace that the dissentients may either yield, or else indulge their opinion without offence to others. We, however (just as we have received), only on the day of the Lord's Resurrection ought to guard not only against kneeling, but every posture and office of solicitude; deferring even our businesses lest we give any place to the devil. Similarly, too, in the period of Pentecost;[77] which period we distinguish by the same solemnity of exultation. But who would hesitate every day to prostrate himself before God, at least in the first prayer with which we enter on the daylight? At fasts, moreover, and Stations, no prayer should be made without kneeling, and the remaining customary marks of humility; for (then) we are not only praying, but deprecating, and making satisfaction to God our Lord.[78]

For Tertullian, kneeling is prohibited, not only on Sunday, but also from the period of Easter through Pentecost. Kneeling, however, is the acceptable posture at the early morning and during fasting.

For Origen standing with eyes elevated and hands extended is the appropriate posture, though he allows for sitting in the case of ailment.

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remembered that he had suffered a pollution he should not break off his prayer…" Trans. Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (London, 1933), p. 4.

[76] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.

[77] Tertullian intends here the Great Fifty Days of Easter, rather than the day of Pentecost, per se.

[78] Tertullian, *De oratione* 23, Trans. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, 689.

Kneeling, on the other hand, is proper for prayers of confession, after the example of Paul in Ephesians 3:14–15.[79]

Cyprian of Carthage makes reference to the Apostle Peter kneeling in prayer at the bedside of Tabitha (Acts 9:40), but without comment.[80] On the other hand, there are several references among Cyprian's treatises to Mark 11:25: "When you stand praying, forgive. . . ."[81] Indeed, in *De dominica oratione*, Cyprian assumed that standing is a typical posture for prayer: "Moreover, when we stand praying, beloved brethren, we ought to be watchful and earnest with our whole heart, intent on our prayers."[82] At the beginning of the fourth century, Lactantius, also from North African, comments in *The Divine Institutes* (ca. 308) that, whereas the posture of animals is to bend to the ground, human beings are made to stand erect when they contemplate God in the heavens. The erect body is meant to be a sign of an upright soul and mind.[83]

The various church orders of the third and fourth centuries refer to the practice of standing for prayer. The *Didascalia Apostolorum* (mid-third century, Syrian) assumes standing for prayer.[84] Likewise the *Apostolic Tradition* and the church orders derived from it assume a standing posture, at least for occasions of communal prayer.[85]

Throughout the early period, however, it appears that the various Christian communities did not adhere to a single practice regarding standing and kneeling. The Council of Nicea in 325 attempted to standardize the practice in canon 20:

> Forasmuch as there are certain persons who kneel on the Lord's Day and in the days of Pentecost (i.e., the Fifty Days of Easter), therefore, to the intent that all things may be uniformly observed everywhere (in every parish), it seems good to the holy Synod that prayer be made to God standing.[86]

While not commenting on the practice of kneeling for prayer in certain circumstances, as Tertullian had done more than a century earlier, the

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[79] Origen, *De oratione* 31.2,3.
[80] Cyprian, *De opere et eleemosynis* 6.
[81] Cyprian, *De ecclesiae unitate* 13; *De Dominica oratione* 23; *Ad Quirinum* (*Testimoniorum libri III*) 1.22.
[82] Cyprian, *De Dominica oratione* 31. Trans. *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 5.
[83] Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones.*
[84] *Didascalia Apostolorum* 2.57.
[85] *Apostolic Tradition* 18.
[86] Trans. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, vol. 14.

council does accept as standard the practice first recorded by Tertullian of forbidding kneeling for prayers on Sunday and during the Easter Season.

Hand Washing

The horarium of *Apostolic Tradition* 41 admonishes Christians to wash their hands before prayer upon rising from bed, both in the morning and at midnight. Washing one's hands upon rising from bed before prayer is a well-attested Jewish practice this period.[87] Clement of Alexandria notes, "It was a custom of the Jews to wash frequently after being in bed." Yet, he appears to cite this practice as a contrast to Christian practice: "It was then well said, 'Be pure, not by washing of water, but in the mind.'"[88] In *De oratione* Tertullian gives an even stronger argument against what he calls the "superstitious" practice of washing hands before prayer.[89] He is opposed to the practice of washing the hands as a matter of ritual cleanliness since baptism has already cleansed the body of ritual defilement. Yet, hand washing before prayer must be rather widespread among Christians since he has found it necessary to do an investigation of the practice. It is curious that Tertullian does not indicate that this is a Jewish ritual, but rather a commemoration of Pilate's washing his hands at the trial of Jesus.

The Sign of the Cross

Apostolic Tradition 41.14 instructs the believers to sign themselves before prayer at midnight. Tertullian also mentions making of the sign of the cross during prayers at night. Commenting on the problems a Christian woman might have with an unbelieving husband, he states: "Shall you escape notice when you sign your bed…when even by night you rise to pray?"[90] Origen indicates: "This sign all the faithful make before beginning tasks, especially prayers or holy readings."[91] *Apostolic Tradition* 41.14, furthermore, indicates that the sign is made with "moist breath,"

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[87] *Letter of Aristeas* 304–6; Kaufmann Hohler, "Ablutions," *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1901–6), 1:70.

[88] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.22.

[89] Tertullian, *De oratione* 13. Trans., *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 3.

[90] Tertullian, *Ad uxorem* 2.5.

[91] Origen, *Selecta in Ezechielem*, MPG 13:801.

which seems to be a reference to baptismal water.[92] While there is little additional evidence for this particular practice, the regulations in the *Rule of Pachomius* attributed to Horsiesios (mid-fourth century) contains this curious direction:

> At the beginning of our prayers let us sign ourselves with the seal of baptism. Let us make the sign of the Cross on our foreheads, as on the day of our baptism, as it is written in Ezekiel (9:4). *Let us not first lower our hand to our mouth or to our beart*, but let us raise it to our forehead, saying in our heart, "We have signed ourselves with the seal."[93]

Here we find the sign of the cross connected to baptism, but with an explicit prohibition of a practice similar to that advocated in the *Apostolic Tradition*, suggesting that the practice did continue in some circles.

Head Coverings

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11:5–7, declares that it is a disgrace for a woman to pray with her head uncovered, while men should pray bare-headed, and he seems to be arguing for the continuation of widely-accepted custom. In several treatises, Tertullian forcefully argues for the veiling of women in the assembly, citing 1 Corinthians 11:5 as justification.[94] Tertullian, however, infers that this entails "a return to a practice has passed out of fashion."[95] Tertullian offers modesty before men as the obvious rationale for the veiling of women, but he also provides an anecdote of woman who felt the tap of an angel on the back of her bare neck by an "angel" (alluding to 1 Corinthians 11:10) who found her to be a temptation. And, finally, he strongly urges women to be veiled at all times, and especially during "every mention of God" which suggests that women cover their heads during private prayer.[96] He, furthermore, notes with disapproval women who during prayer place on their heads "a fringe, or a tuft, or any thread whatever" or even "the palm of the hand," during prayer, rather than fully covering "the space cover by the hair when unbound."[97] Similarly, *Apostolic Tradition* 18.5 gives the following direction: "But let all women clothe the heads in a pall, but not in a piece of linen only, for this is not a head covering."

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[92] Note also the Latin version of *Apostolic Tradition* 42.2.
[93] Trans. Armand Veilleux, *Pachomian Chronicle and Rules* (Kalamazoo, 1981), p. 199.
[94] Tertullian, *De virginibus velandis; De oratione* 22; *De cultu feminarum* 2.7.
[95] Bonnie Thurston, *The Widows: A Women's Ministry in the Early Church* (Minneapolis, 1989), p. 80.
[96] Thurston, *The Widows*, p. 80.
[97] Tertullian, *De virginibus velandis* 17.

Community Boundaries and the Kiss of Peace

In 1 Corinthians 14:22–25, Paul notes the possible presence of unbelievers in the gathered church as an argument for orderly worship. One may assume this included prayer. Nevertheless, early Christians, as the Jews, could not pray together with pagans for obvious theological reasons, and this set Christians and Jews apart from much of Greco-Roman culture.

In Matthew 6:5, Jesus warns against "praying like the hypocrites," specifically the public practices of some Jewish who made a display of their prayer. However (and unfortunately) the label "hypocrites" becomes in early Christian literature a code word for all Jews. *Didache* 8.2 introduces the Lord's Prayer (in a form that rewords the introduction to the prayer recorded in Matt. 6.9–13) with the phrase: "And do not pray as the hypocrites do…"[98] by which the Didachist means the Jews. The prohibitions against Christians having relationships with Jews are numerous, but such prohibitions are evidence for the practice itself. In the third century, Origen expresses his disapproval of Christians who go to synagogue and to the church,[99] and as late as the late fourth century, John Chrysostom preaches against the same practice.[100] These prohibitions focus on ritual practices (the keeping of the Sabbath, ablutions, Passover, kosher laws) with no specific mention of prayer.

By the third century, we find regulations about boundaries more internal to the Christianity as a distinct religion. The *Didascalia Apostolorum* prohibits prayer with those who have been excommunicated: "For if one communicates and prays with him who is expelled from the church…he is defiled with him."[101] Cyprian warns that schismatics cannot truly pray in Christ's name, even though they may call upon the name of Christ in their prayer.[102] The *Didascalia Apostolorum* 10 requires that excommunicated believers who wished to be reinstated

[98] This introductory phrase in *The Didache* is also similar to Matthew's. However, Matthew does not refer to the *ujpokritaiv*, but to the *ejqnikoi*: Do not pray "as the Gentiles." See Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache* (Minneapolis, 1998), p. 134.

[99] N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian relations in Third-Century Palestine* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 86.

[100] He preaches against this practice in his *Homily Against the Jews* 1.1. See Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations Between Christian and Jews in the Roman Empire* (135–425), trans. H. McKeating (Oxford, 1986), p. 326.

[101] *Didascalia Apostolorum* 15. Trans. Arthur Vööbus, *The Didascalia Apostolorum in Syriac* II, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, vols. 179–180 (Louvain, 1979), p. 150.

[102] Cyprian, *De ecclesiae unitate* 12.

must first demonstrate repentance before they were allowed to rejoin the community at prayer. By the late fourth century, the *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.8–9 requires penitents as a group to pray separately from the rest of the church, with a dismissal before the bidding of general intercessions with the faithful.

Catechumens formed a special class of believers. According to Justin Martyr, while those preparing for baptism are taught to pray as part of their preparation (*1 Apology* 61), the first act of the newly-baptized is to join with the assembly in common prayer (*1 Apology* 65). Similarly, and somewhat later, *Apostolic Tradition* 21.24 indicates that the newly-baptized join the church in the prayer of the faithful. An earlier chapter on the catechumenate, *Apostolic Tradition* 18, had indicated that the catechumens stand apart from the faithful during prayer just as *Apostolic Tradition* 27 indicates that catechumens are segregated during communal meals.[103]

In the third century, we find regulations for the segregation of women and men for prayer during common worship. The *Didascalia Apostolorum* 12, for example, states: "And again let those who are girls also sit by themselves; but if there be no room let them stand up behind the women. And let those who are married and young and have children, stand by them, and let the aged women and widows sit by themselves."[104] *Apostolic Tradition* 18:2 is even more direct: "And let the women stand praying in a place in the church all by themselves, whether faithful or catechumens." While there is ample evidence in late antiquity for a similar segregation of women and men in synagogues, there is no clear Jewish evidence for this practice in the third century or earlier. However, the segregation of women and men in public assemblies, such as the theater, is widespread in the Greco-Roman world.[105]

Whereas the separation of Christians from pagans and Jews during prayer has an obvious theological rationale, the segregation of penitents, catechumens, women and men during worship and prayer may arisen due to the practice of the kiss of peace. While Paul refers to the holy kiss is four of his letters with no obvious connection to prayer, by the middle of the second century it appears that Christians widely employed

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[103] Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, pp. 99, 134.

[104] Vööbus, *Didascalia*, p. 132.

[105] Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, p. 99. See Roos S. Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York, 1992), pp. 106–7, 126.

the kiss as the conclusion to communal prayer. Justin Martyr mentions the kiss of peace at the conclusion of the prayers of the faithful in his description of a post-baptismal Eucharist (*1 Apology* 65). In the early third century, Tertullian describes the kiss of peace as a "seal of prayer" (*De oratione* 18), though it is not clear what he means by this designation, since he also notes the use of the kiss in the public greetings of Christians. A little later, Origen recognizes the practice of a kiss following prayer (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* 10.13). Likewise, the kiss is found at the conclusion of public prayer in *Apostolic Tradition* 18.3 and 21.26. Throughout the early period, the kiss is restricted within the Christian community, and catechumens are not allowed to share the kiss even among themselves. Since the early witnesses indicate that the kiss was performed mouth to mouth, this segregation may indicate fear of spiritual contamination through contact with the unclean *pneuma* of non-Christians.[106] Furthermore, as Michael Penn has shown, the kiss was a marker of family boundaries, and the church understood itself to be a family.[107] Until the third century, the evidence indicates that there was no segregation of men and women for the kiss, or for prayer which preceded it.[108] As the church grew, however, the model of the church as alternative family became more difficult to maintain, and fear of scandal caused by promiscuous kissing pressured communities to segregate during the kiss, and, as a result, to segregate for the prayer that preceded the kiss in public worship.[109]

Other Gestures

Beyond the gestures noted above, we find references to various other practices. Praying with hands extended (which Tertullian, in *De oratione* 14, compares to Christ on the cross) is depicted in early iconography. Praying toward the east is also well attested, beginning as early as Clement of Alexandria in *Stromesis* 7.7. In this same treatise, Clement notes

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[106] L. Edward Phillips, *The Ritual Kiss in Early Christian Worship* (Bramcote, 1996), pp. 19–21.

[107] Michael Penn, "Performing Family: Ritual Kissing and the Construction of Early Christian Kinship," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10 (2002), pp. 151–174.

[108] Tertullian (*Ad uxorem* 2.4) recognizes that the kissing of "brothers" in the church could pose a problem for women married to unbelievers.

[109] Nevertheless, Christian husbands and wives are admonished to pray together at home in *Apostolic Tradition* 41.13. Likewise, Tertullian approves of spouses praying together (*Ad uxorem* 2.6). Origen, dissents from the opinion that the conjugal bedroom is an appropriate place for prayer (*De oratione* 31.4).

the practice of "silent prayer," that is, praying mentally without any vocalization. Glossolalia, which the New Testament attests as part of the apostolic church, also continued to be practiced among some Christian communities, especially among Montanists[110] and Gnostic sects.[111]

The Theological Significance of Early Christian Prayer

As shown in this investigation, the written records of the developing Christian church exhibit a diversity of practices regarding prayer. Yet, underlying this diversity are some significant unifying themes. Christians in various places may have prayed three, four, five, or seven times during the day, but universally they acknowledged that the ideal life was one of ceaseless prayer. This meant that, at the very least, daily life ought to be punctuated with regular hours of prayer, either privately or in common. And, while early theologians, such as Clement of Alexandria, may have understood prayer as a mental activity, the attention given to posture, gesture and communal boundaries, despite the diversity of actual practice, demonstrates that early Christians believed prayer is also, irreducibly, an embodied activity. Bodily practices are integral expressions of the meaning of prayer. Or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that proto-orthodox Christians resisted a Gnostic mind-body dualism.

Clement of Alexandria, who wrote the first sustained Christian treatment of prayer in Book 7 of the *Stromata*,[112] offers a concise theological definition: "Prayer is converse with God."[113] But Clement goes much further to say that prayer, along with "holy works" constitutes the sacrifices that God loves. Moreover, he emphasizes the fundamentally communal purpose of prayer. The diverse voices of Christians join together in prayer, manifesting the "unity of faith," and constituting the "terrestrial altar," "having a common voice and one mind."[114] Indeed, the Christian never prays as an individual believer "for though he

[110] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.17.

[111] See, for example. *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth* in the Nag Hammadi Gnostic corpus (VI.6) which contains transcriptions of what appears to be glossolalia.

[112] On Clement's theology of prayer see Michael Joseph Brown, *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes* (New York, 2004), pp. 121–164.

[113] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.

[114] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.6.

pray alone, he has the choir of saints [ἁγίων, i.e., the "holy" angels] standing with him."[115]

The gospels of Matthew and Luke record that Jesus teaches his disciples to pray by giving them a model—the so-called Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer is quoted in the *Didache* 8.2 in a form quite similar to the rendition of the prayer in Matthew 7:9–13, and in the early third century, Tertullian and Origen both write expositions of the Lord's Prayer, followed a little later by Cyprian. But, perhaps, the most distinctive role of Christ in early Christian prayer is found in the appeal to Christ as the mediator of prayer. The prayers which conclude the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (ca. 95) contain doxologies to God offered "through" [διά] Jesus Christ, as does the Eucharistic prayer in *Didache* 9. By the middle of the second century Justin Martyr describes the Eucharistic prayer as offered to God the Father, "through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."[116] In the early third century, Origen states in his treatise *On Prayer* that prayer "should end [*katapaustevon*] by giving glory to God through Christ in the Holy Spirit"[117] and provides the earliest sustained discussion of the mediating role of Christ in prayer.[118] By the middle of the third century, fully Trinitarian doxologies are found as a typical conclusion to liturgical prayers.[119]

According to Clement of Alexandria, the subjects of prayer are the objects of our "desires and aspirations." The praying Christian must consciously cultivate a desire for what is truly good, because goodness is the nature of God. Consequently, Christian prayer is not to be used for "the injury of men" (as Clement supposes the prayers of Pagans and even the Jews often ask) but only for that which is truly good.[120] Tertullian, some years later, will echo this theme: "Christ has willed that [prayer] be operative for no evil: He conferred on it all its virtue in the cause of good. And so it knows nothing save now to recall the souls of the departed from the very path of death, to transform the weak, to restore the sick, to purge the possessed, to open prison-bars, to

[115] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.12.
[116] Justin Martyr, *I Apology* 65. Note also chapter 67.
[117] Origen, *De oratione* 33.1.
[118] Origen, *De oratione* 15–16.
[119] See Josef A. Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer* (Collegeville, 1989), pp. 144–171.
[120] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7.7.

loose the bonds of the innocent."[121] In short, prayer unites the believer with the saints and causes the believer to participate in the nature of God as God has been made known in specifically in the work of Jesus Christ. For these early theologians, therefore, Christian prayer is the fundamental and distinctively Christian vocation.

[121] Tertullian, *De oratione* 29.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN PATRISTIC LITERATURE[1]

Karlfried Froehlich

Jules Lebreton once said that the Lord's Prayer was the biblical text most commented upon in ancient Christian literature. Indeed, it is hard to find any author who does not remark upon, or at least allude to, these few biblical verses somewhere in the course of his extant works. There is also an astonishing amount of substantial commentary from fathers and church writers East and West.[2] In the East, the foundational piece was Origen's exposition of the Lord's Prayer in his treatise "On Prayer" (233/34).[3] Gregory of Nyssa used this work extensively in five profound homilies "On the Lord's Prayer" which he preached in his mature years (after 379) and which remained popular reading for centuries to come.[4] We also have running commentaries in Cyril of Jerusalem's "Fifth Mystagogical Catechesis" from the middle of the fourth century;[5] Theodore of Mopsuestia's "Eleventh Catechetical Homily" of 388/92;[6] John Chrysostom's Commentary on Matthew;[7]

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[2] For a survey in English, see G. W. H. Lampe, "'Our Father' in the Fathers," in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp*, ed. P. Brooks (London, 1975), pp. 11–31.

[3] Greek text: GCS *Origenes* 2, ed. P. Koetschau (1899), pp. 297–403; English translation: *Alexandrian Christianity*, ed. J. E. Oulton and H. Chadwick. The Library of Christian Classics, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1954), pp. 238–387. In the bibliographical notes, I am using the standard abbreviations for series in which patristic texts are published. They are listed, e.g., in J. Quasten et al., *Patrology*, vols. 1–4 (Westminster, 1962–1986).

[4] Greek text: PG 44, 1120–1193; English translation: Hilda C. Graef, ACW 18 (1954), pp. 21–84.

[5] Greek text: *Sources Chrétiennes* 126 (1966), ed. A. Piédagnel and P. Paris, pp. 160–168; English translation: L. P. McCauley and A. Stephenson, FC 64 (1970), pp. 198–202.

[6] Syriac text with French translation: R. Tonneau and R. Devreesse, *Les homélies catechétiques de Théodore de Mopsuestia*, Studi e Testi, 145 (Rome, 1949), pp. 281–321: English translation: A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, Woodbrooke Studies, 6 (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 1–16.

[7] Greek text: PG 57, 278–283; English translation: NPNF, ser. 1, vol. 10, pp. 134–137.

and Cyril of Alexandria's biblical commentary on the Gospel of Luke.[8] In the West, the list is even longer.[9] The earliest and most influential expositions were Part 1 of Tertullian's treatise *On Prayer*, written just around 200 A.D.,[10] and a treatise *On the Lord's Prayer* which Cyprian wrote at the beginning of the Decian persecution in 250.[11] Ambrose of Milan explained the Lord's Prayer as part of his mystagogical catecheses of c. 390/91 which are preserved in his *De sacramentis*.[12] From Augustine's hand we have the early commentary in his "Exposition of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount" written between 392 and 396;[13] a wonderfully rich treatment in his pastoral Letter 130 to the widow Proba, a noblewoman from Rome who had fled to North Africa from the invading Visigoths in 410;[14] a catechetical exposition in Sermons 56–59 from about the same time;[15] and an anti-Pelagian interpretation in the late treatise *On the gift of perseverance* (429/30) in which he makes ample use of Cyprian's classical exposition as proof of his thesis that perseverance is a free gift from God and is a central theme of all petitions.[16] From the first half of the fifth century we also have brief remarks in Jerome's commentary on the Gospel of Matthew;[17] full expositions in John Cassian's "Conferences" (IX.18–24);[18] the poet Sedulius' "Easter Hymn" (II, 231–300) and its prose version in the *Paschale Opus* (II, 17);[19] the fourteenth homily of the anonymous *Opus imperfectum in*

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[8] English translation (1859) of the Syriac text: R. Payne Smith, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (n.p., 1983), pp. 297–320.

[9] See the recent monograph by K. B. Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln: Lateinische Auslegungen des Vaterunsers in der Alten Kirche bis zum fünften Jahrhundert*, Freiburger Theologische Studien, 132 (Freiburg, 1985).

[10] Latin text: CCSL 1 (1954), ed. G. F. Diercks, pp. 257–263; English translation: R. Arbesmann, FC 40 (1959), pp. 157–168.

[11] Latin text: CCSL 3A (1976), ed. C. Moreschini, pp. 88–113; English translation: R. J. Deferrari, FC 36 (1958), pp. 127–159.

[12] *De sacramentis* V.4.–18–30. Latin text: CSEL 73 (1955), ed. O. Faller, pp. 65–72; English translation: R. J. Deferrari, FC 44 (1963), pp. 314–318.

[13] Latin text: CCSL 35 (1967), ed. A. Mutzenbecher, pp. 99–131; English translation: J. J. Jepsen, ACW 5 (1948), pp. 100–127.

[14] Latin text: CSEL 44 (1904), ed. A. Goldbacher, pp. 40–77; English translation: W. Parsons, FC 18 (1958), pp. 376–401.

[15] Latin text: PL 38, 377–402; English translation: NPNF, ser. 1, vol. 6, pp. 274–289.

[16] Latin text: PL 45, 993–999; English translation: NPNF, ser. 1, vol. 5, pp. 526–529.

[17] Latin text: CCSL 77 (1969), ed. D. Hurst and M. Adriaen, pp. 36–37; no English translation.

[18] Latin text: CSEL 13 (1886), ed. M. Petschenig, pp. 265–272; English translation: C. Luibheid, *John Cassian: Conferences*, CWS (New York, 1985), pp. 111–116.

[19] Latin text: PL 19, 622–634; English translation: G. Sigerson (Dublin, 1922). I was unable to consult this translation.

Matthaeum;[20] six sermons (nos. 67–72) of Petrus Chrysologus, bishop of Ravenna,[21] and several anonymous homilies under the names of Augustine, Chrysostom, and Quodvultdeus.[22]

Traces of the Lord's Prayer and its interpretation can, of course, be found much earlier. Context and wording in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke reflect not only use but also interpretation. Among the Apostolic Fathers, allusions have been claimed to be present in 1 Clement (13:3; 34:5; 60:2–3) as well as Polycarp's Epistle (6:1–2; 7:2) and his Martyrdom (7:1), and the full quotation of the text in Didache 8:2 has posed a considerable challenge to exegetes and historians. While the context of the Didache passage with its sections on baptism, fasting, praying, and the eucharistic meal reflects a polemic against "judaizing dissidents" in the church or churches addressed,[23] it also underscores the strong Jewish matrix of the prayer. The final two-part doxology ("For yours is the power, and the glory"), absent in Matthew and Luke, appears again in the prayer formulas for the eucharistic service in Didache 9 and 10 (9:4; 10:5) where we also find the phrase, "our Father" (9:2); "bread," "kingdom" (9:4; 10:5); "your holy name" (10:2); and "salvation from all evil" (10:5). The Jewish roots of all these prayers cannot be doubted, and the variations in the transmitted texts of the Lord's Prayer—the Didache version is close to Matthew but deviates at four points—are in themselves an indication of Jewish liturgical practice as its *Sitz im Leben*. One of these natural Jewish variations may be the doxology itself: Jewish prayers frequently had a freely formulated ending (*hotima*, seal) for which apparently one form became standard in the Christian use of the Lord's Prayer in the second century.

How early is the evidence for such a general use of the Lord's Prayer in the Christian churches? The question received new urgency with the discovery of a possible Christian reading of the famous magical square SATOR AREPO in 1926.[24] The square, formed by the five

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[20] Latin text (under the name of John Chrysostom): PG 56, 711–715; no English translation.

[21] Latin text: CCSL 24A (1981), ed. A. Olivar, pp. 402–444; English translation: G. E. Ganss, FC 17 (1953), pp. 115–123 (partial).

[22] Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 234–276.

[23] A. Tuilier, "Didache," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin and New York, 1981), vol. 8, p. 733.

[24] See H. Last, "The Rotas-Sator Square: Present Positions and Future Prospects," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s. 3 (1952): 92–97; W. O. Moeller, *The Mithraic Origin and Meanings of the Rotas-Sator Square*; Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales, 38 (Leiden, 1973), esp. pp. 44–52 (bibliography).

words SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS, can be read as a cryptogram spelling two times PATER NOSTER, the beginning of the 'Our Father' in Latin, in the form of a cross, with the "N" as the cross point and the letter A and O added twice on both sides. The presence of the square in four locations at Pompeii would force one to assume that the prayer was already well known in Italy in its Latin translation as early as 79 A.D., that is, at a time when the language of Christians in Rome was still Greek and their number outside Rome was very small. I would side with the scholars who regard the square as pre-Christian, dissolvable as a cryptogram into other word sequences (e.g., PATER-N-SOTER), so that it does not tell us anything about the early Christian use of the Lord's Prayer. Its possible Christian reading may explain to some extent, however, why the square continued to enjoy such success later on, even though no patristic writer ever refers to the PATER-NOSTER reading.

II

The reason for the wide diffusion of the Lord's Prayer in the Late Roman Empire was certainly not that it was a favorite biblical passage. Rather, the underlying prayer itself, short, succinct, and covered by the authority of the Christian "lawgiver," had a tremendous potential in the popular prayer culture of the time in which the superstitious use of powerful prayer formulae was rampant. Just as the occurrences of the SATOR AREPO square at Pompeii and elsewhere point to the use of such verbal devices in the context of magic and incantation, so the text of the "Our Father" is found (at least later) on the accessories of superstitious popular piety such as scrapes of parchment, lamps or amulets, serving as a talisman or a guarding charm.

For Christian theologians, the framework of the text of the Lord's Prayer in the Gospels gave it additional significance. The use of the "Our Father" among Christians was a command of Christ: "Pray then like this" (Matthew 6:9); "When you pray, say" (Luke 11:2). The framing words do not indicate what kind of use was intended—use in private prayer or in the communal worship setting. Origen noted the differences between the Matthean and the Lukan form and concluded that the two settings, one a public ordinance, the other the answer to a private request, indicated that these were two different prayers with a number of common elements. The quotation in Didache 8:2 is followed by the

injunction: "Three times daily you shall pray in this manner." While the rule of "three times daily" seems to imply a private prayer discipline according to Jewish custom, the addition of the *hotima* suggests the setting of communal prayer which is the subject of discussion in the following chapters. Some patristic authors lay great stress on the communal use. Their warrant is the text itself. It says, "*Our* Father," not "*My* Father" (Cyprian; Chrysostom). Clearly, very early already and even more so later on, the central *Sitz im Leben* of the Lord's Prayer was in the worship of the congregation while we hear little of its use in private devotion before the late third and early fourth centuries.

Cyprian linked his interpretation of the address, "Our Father," to the experience of reciting the Lord's Prayer at baptism: "As soon as people believe in his [Christ's] name and have become children of God, they must begin by giving thanks and professing themselves as children of God by calling God their father in heaven" (ch. 9). They also must "give witness with the very first words after their rebirth that they renounce their earthly, carnal father" (ibid.). Cyprian seems to imply that the first public recitation of the Lord's Prayer by newly baptized Christians occurred immediately after their baptism, presumably when they joined the congregation in the celebration of the eucharist for the first time. From Augustine's writings we can reconstruct the somewhat more elaborate sequence of the preparation for baptism in the North African church of the fourth century. People who asked to be "enrolled" received first the catechetical instructions for *competentes* which culminated in the teaching of the creed and its public recitation (*traditio* and *redditio symboli*) during Lent. The Lord's Prayer was taught on the Saturday before the fifth Sunday in Lent ("Judica") and recited one week later on the eve of Palm Sunday (*redditio orationis*).[25]

The passage from Cyprian strongly suggests that his church knew the use of the Lord's Prayer in the eucharistic liturgy as well. The first explicit mention of this practice, however, occurs with Cyril of Jerusalem in the middle of the fourth century. The step-by-step description of the eucharistic celebration of Cyril's fifth "mystagogical homily" places the "Our Father" after the *Praefatio* and the Great Thanksgiving with *epiclesis* and intercessions, immediately before the dialogue, "Holy things for the holy"—"One is holy, one is the Lord, Jesus Christ," and

[25] Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 111–112.

the communion. In recent scholarship, the thesis that such a use of the prayer goes far back, perhaps into apostolic times, has been vigorously defended, not only by Roman Catholics and Anglicans but also by Reformed scholars. Willy Rordorf even suggested that variations of verb tense in the manuscript tradition of the fifth petition might reflect liturgical practice: Different from the present tense, *aphiomen* or *aphiemen* (Luke; Western mss of Matthew), the aorist in Matthew, *aphēkamen*, seems to presuppose a separate act of reconciliation before the praying of the "Our Father" at the eucharist.[26] Such early use at the eucharist, however, is doubted by others.[27] They point to the fact that the earliest accounts of eucharistic celebrations such as Justin Martyr and Hippolytus do not mention the recitation of the "Our Father" among the prayers.

We know little about the use of the Lord's Prayer in early monastic communities. Traditional Benedictine practice gave it a place in all the monastic hours. Balthasar Fischer has suggested that its inclusion may have been meant as a recollection of one's baptism and that the practice of silent recitation at compline is a remnant of the Prayer's original use in private devotion.[28]

III

We owe most of the surviving patristic expositions of the Lord's Prayer to its liturgical use, especially in the context of baptism. Many of them were preached as catechetical homilies either preceding the *translatio orationis* as in North Africa, or following it during Easter week as "mystagogical catecheses" as in the case of Milan and Jerusalem. This may explain the overwhelming emphasis on the Prayer's doctrinal and ethical content: The "Our Father" was seen as a text teaching in brief everything a Christian needed to know about the faith and Christian behavior. Tertullian praised it as *breviarium totius evangelii* (a short compend of the entire gospel). Some later writers marveled at the wealth of theological content expressed in the address alone: "Our Father—to say these words means to confess one's faith in the forgiveness of sins, remission of punishment, justification, sanctification, redemption, adoption as

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[26] W. Rordorf, "Wie auch wir vergeben *haben* unsern Schuldnern (Matth. VI, 12b)," in *Studia Patristica*, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin, 1970), vol. 10, pp. 236–241.

[27] F. E. Vokes, "The Lord's Prayer in the First Three Centuries," ibid., pp. 253–260.

[28] B. Fischer, "Formen privater Tauferinnerung im Abendland: Das Herrengebet als Tauferinnerung," *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 9 (1959): 161–162.

a child of God, an heir, a sibling of the Only-Begotten, enjoying the communion of the Holy Spirit" (Chrysostom). The role of the "Our Father" in catechetical instruction made it inevitable to mine the short text for all its possible implications.

Chrysostom's exposition comes from his Matthew-commentary. Again, since the First Gospel was the primary source of the Gospel lessons in the liturgy, commentaries on Matthew are relatively numerous and yield some important exegetical treatments in extant sections on Matthew 6. Perhaps the most interesting group of patristic expositions of the Lord's Prayer, however, belongs in the context of apologetic literature. In their defense of Christian prayer in general, Christian writers reveal the deeper reasons for the relative cohesion of patristic exegesis of the "Our Father" as well as for much of its variety. A general assumption is shared with all religions: Prayer in its nature is first and foremost petition, the imploration of the deity for a favor or benefit. The problem obviously is the danger of attempting to strike a bargain with God, to manipulate the deity. In a thoughtful article some years ago, Don Capps has raised the question whether petitionary prayer is correctly understood if it is seen as a battle of wills—human vs. divine.[29] He prefers to describe it as an elemental act of communication. I would like to submit that this very insight is expressed in much of the patristic theology of prayer, most forcefully by Origen and Augustine.

IV

Origen's treatise on prayer is styled as the answer to some question posed to him by his patron, Ambrose, and an otherwise unknown lady, Tatiana.

> Let the position be stated now in the very words of the letter you addressed to me. They are as follows: First, if God knows the future beforehand and it must come to pass, prayer is in vain. Secondly, if all things happen according to the will of God, and if what is willed by him is fixed, and nothing of what he wills can be changed, prayer is in vain.[30]

The letter perhaps contained the additional request for an exposition of the Lord's Prayer. In the second part of his treatise, Origen uses such

[29] D. Capps, "The Psychology of Petitionary Prayer," *Theology Today* 39 (1982): 130–142.
[30] V.6. Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, p. 250.

an exposition to reenforce his general points, adding in a short third section some practical advice about time, location, and proper physical posture for prayer. His answer to the question asked by his correspondents begins with the central philosophical issue: free will. The very act of praying as an act of free will is foreseen and foreordained by God: "God uses to the full the free will of each thing upon earth."[31] "Each act of free will is adapted to such an arrangement of the whole as the settled order of the universe demands."[32]

Maria-Barbara v. Stritsky has clarified the philosophical context:[33] Stoic, Epicurean and Neoplatonic attitudes toward prayer were not uniform. Where prayer was criticized as "superfluous," the reason was a high, abstract view of a providential deity and its utterly transcendent nature; prayer cannot touch it. Still, the same authors often conceded a limited value of prayer in the realm of magic and theurgy and as the wordless expression of the intellectual worship of the *sophos*; the attitude of prayer can be an appropriate preparation for the inner ascent. Origen countered the criticism with the affirmation of Christian revelation: In Christ, God can be known and approached. "Through Christ," not to Christ, prayers can be, and should be, offered to God who is the giver of all knowledge but has made it clear that he wants to be asked. Origen also appropriated the philosophical argument about the limited value of prayer. Even if petitionary prayer were superfluous, there are always many benefits for the one who prays:

> If the calling to mind and reminiscence of an illustrious person who has profited by wisdom stirs us up to emulate him or her and often checks evil impulses, how much more does the calling to mind of God, the Father of the universe, together with prayer to him, benefit those who are confident in themselves that they stand before and speak to God as one who is present.[34]

We find the same line of argument in Augustine's writings. Discussing Matthew 6:8, Augustine raises the question, "Does it make sense to pray?" He answers: "Yes—the very effort we make in praying calms the heart, makes it clean, and renders it more capable of receiving the divine gifts which are poured out upon us in a spiritual manner. For

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[31] VII.1; ibid., p. 254.

[32] VI.4; ibid., p. 252.

[33] M.-B v. Stritsky, *Studien zur Überlieferung und Interpretation des Vaterunsers in der frühchristlichen Literatur*, Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie, 57 (Münster i.W., 1989).

[34] VIII.2; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, p. 255.

God does not hear us because he seeks the favor of our prayers. . . . But *we* are not always prepared to receive."[35] Or: "We do not need words in dealing with God to obtain what we want; what matters are the things we carry in our minds and the direction of our thoughts, with pure love and single affection. The Lord made use of words to teach us those very things that by committing them to memory we may remember them at the time of prayer."[36] What should we ask for? God knows beforehand what we need (Matthew 6:8). In his *Letter to Proba*, Augustine answers very much like the philosophers: "Pray for the *beata vita*, the happy life. All humans desire it." That life will be God's final gift and will therefore remain the constant object of our longing as long as we are on earth: "When we pray with constant desire and exercise faith, hope, and charity, we 'pray always' (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Yet, at certain stated times and hours we also use words in prayer to God that we . . . may acquaint ourselves with the measure of progress we have made in this desire."[37] This indeed is the common conviction of patristic writers concerning prayer: God wants our prayer, verbal and attitudinal, but God does not need it. We pray not for God's benefit but for our own. *We* need this elemental act of communication.

V

We noticed the central place of Matthew 6:8 in Augustine's argument. The foundational role of the biblical material in Origen's apology for prayer is even more striking. Practically all of his main points are unfolded as interpretations of specific biblical texts. The exegesis of an *agraphon*, "Ask for the great things, and the little things shall be added unto you" (cf. Matthew 6:8, 33) yields the central admonition that the content of prayer should not focus on this bodily life but on the heavenly things connected with our salvation.[38] 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "pray without ceasing," is exegeted in terms of prayer as the attitude of "tuning in" on God: "That person prays without ceasing . . . who combines with the prayer the needful deeds and the prayer with the fitting actions. For thus alone can we accept 'pray without ceasing' as

[35] *Sermon on the Mount* II.3.14; cf. Jepsen, ACW 5, p. 103.
[36] II.3.13; cf. ibid., pp. 102–103.
[37] Letter 130.4 and 9.
[38] XIV.1; XVI.2; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, pp. 266, 272.

a practicable saying, if we speak of the whole life of the saint as one great unbroken prayer of which that which is commonly called prayer is a part."[39] This understanding is connected with the injunction of verbal prayer three times a day citing the biblical example of Daniel (Daniel 6:10), Peter (Acts 10:9–10), and David (Psalm 5:3; 141:2). The book of Tobit allows Origen to infer that angelic beings close to God are engaged in enforcing and mediating our prayers before God (Tobit 3:16–17; 12:12),[40] and Psalm 123:1 ("To you I have lifted up my eyes, o you who dwells in heaven") teaches that the result of our praying is anagogy, the spiritual ascent of the soul to God.[41] Even the proper subdivisions of verbal prayer are inferred from a verse of the Bible: "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings" (1 Timothy 2:1). Ambrose, in the liturgical context of his mystagogical catechesis, changed the list to "praise, supplication, postulation, thanksgiving" and applied it to the seven parts of the Lord's Prayer.

VI

Modern exegetes note with some condescension the absence in the patristic interpretation of the Lord's Prayer of important exegetical insights such as a consideration of the Jewish background, the eschatological thrust of all the petitions as a prayer of Jesus, redactional differences between Matthew and Luke and their implications for variety among different early Christian communities, and other details. We have to keep in mind, however, the peculiar nature of patristic exegesis which showed less interest in the uniqueness of a passage than in its place within the unified biblical witness as a whole. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that the interpretation of the Lord's Prayer and its single petitions was given its specific direction by other biblical texts which were widely shared as common reference points. Many of these texts owe their association with the "Our Father" to the liturgy, i.e., to the familiar lessons read at baptism or eucharist. The great prominence given to Romans 10:13–15 in Augustine's Sermons 56–59, e.g., clearly derives from the Epistle lesson at the baptismal service. It seems to me that the various accents in the exegesis of particular petitions of the Lord's Prayer derive as much from the persuasive power of such biblical

[39] XII.2; ibid., pp. 261–262.
[40] XI.1; ibid., p. 259.
[41] IX.2.; XXIII.4; ibid., pp. 256, 285.

cross-references as from the philosophical and doctrinal emphases of an author's hermeneutical principles. One consequence is that a textual parallel between two interpretations does not necessarily indicate literary dependence. Modern authors show surprise at the relatively strong consensus which they discover among patristic interpretations of the Lord's Prayer at many points. Otto Dibelius, in his still valuable doctoral dissertation written under Harnack in 1902, found that the astonishing closeness of Luther's catechetical explanations of the Prayer to earlier vernacular texts has to be attributed not to direct borrowing but to a common source: the unified patristic tradition with its store of explanatory biblical keys.[42]

In discussing the patristic interpretation of the Lord's Prayer we must pay close attention to this store of passages adduced by the writers, especially the earliest ones whose work was likely to provide the foundation for a tradition on which later writers would draw. Often, these traditional cross-references steered the interpretation in a specific, sometimes surprising direction and might explain common emphases which we encounter time and again.

VII

a. Take the address, "Our Father." Today, many people question the implications of a gender-specific, exclusively male Father-God. It is easy to accuse the patristic writers of insensitivity at this point. As some feminist theologians have pointed out, our problem arose with the ideological hardening of an authoritarian father-image in a male-dominated culture which did not allow the different nuances of a much richer Jewish and Christian biblical God-talk to be heard and heeded. In a brilliant essay published in 1976 Antonie Wlosok demonstrated that it was Lactantius in the fourth century who adapted the image of the Christian God to a Constantinian ideology of *Dominus Pater ac Deus*, God Father Almighty, which politicized the older Roman notion of *patria potestas* in a one-sided, imperialistic direction and prepared the way for the political, cultural, and theological male absolutisms of later times.[43]

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[42] O. Dibelius, *Das Vaterunser: Umrisse zu einer Geschichte des Gebets in der Alten und Mittleren Kirche* (Gießen, 1903).

[43] A. Wlosok, "Vater und Vatervorstellungen in der römischen Kultur," in *Das Vaterbild im Abendland*, ed. H. Tellenbach (Stuttgart, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 18–54. Her argument

It is significant that, for patristic writers, the "Father" of the Lord's Prayer does not refer to a biological notion of fatherhood, even in the more abstract sense of origin or creatorship, but to the father-image of classical Roman law. God-Father is clothed with infinite power because his care, his solicitude, his responsibility for every living thing are infinite. Tertullian, the Roman lawyer, sees the invocation, "Our Father," as teaching by the very term the "Son" (John 10:30) and the "Mother," the church: the Lord's Prayer is the prayer of the baptized whom the church has reborn and who have joined God's family. The infinite *distance* rather than the Lactantian connection between the infinite deity of God and the notion of "Father" in the address is keenly felt by many (Cyprian; Gregory of Nyssa; Chrysostom). Some point to the responsibility which this address imposes on those who utter it lest, by their lives, they prove unworthy of the privilege of childhood. Wherever this privilege of childhood is stressed, however, it is clear that biblical adoption-passages guide the argument, first and foremost among them John 1:11–12: "He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God."

In this case, however, the first part of the quotation, v. 11, also fueled the ubiquitous argument of supercession. Origen noted that, while God is called the "father" of Israel in the Old Testament, he is never invoked as such. To Moses, another "name" for God was revealed (Exodus 3:14); only Christ opened up the possibility of addressing God as "Father."[44] In rejecting the Son, the Jews rejected the Father. Isaiah 1:2–4 or 2–9 was often quoted for the rejection of God by the Jewish nation and its consequences, and Tertullian adduced John 8:44 to radicalize the judgment: Not God, the devil is now their father.

b. Tertullian and Cyprian already made a distinction between the first three petitions and the last four. The first three, they explained, concern "heavenly" things, the other four "earthly" ones. Augustine was somewhat more precise, applying a more differentiated eschatology: "The first three petitions refer to things which will find their fulfillment in eternity only, even though they begin here on earth. . . . The other four,

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is used in J. Moltmann's discussion of the "Our Father" in an article entitled, "Ich glaube an Gott den Vater: Patriarchalische oder nicht-patriarichalische Rede von Gott?" *Evangelische Theologie* 43 (1983): 397–415.

[44] XXII.1–2; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, pp. 280–281.

it seems to me, concern the needs of the present life."[45] Nearly every interpreter notes that the first petitions cannot intend to add anything to that which God already has or is. God is perfect in himself. Biblical cross-references establish this basic assumption. God's name, nothing less than "Being" itself (Exodus 3:14), *is* holy (Isaiah 6:3; Exodus 20:4; Leviticus 19:4); God's kingdom, his rulership *are* realities now (Psalm 22:28; 93:1–2; 103:19; 145:13); God's will *is* done. The interpretation of this latter petition was often guided by Jesus' prayer at Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39, 42 par.) which suggested that the petition aims at the virtue of obedience, most perfectly fulfilled in the martyrs (Tertullian; Cyprian). It is possible that this "obvious" biblical key reinforced the general tendency to internalize and personalize all three initial petitions, including the first: Hallowed by your name—*in us* or *by us*. Chrysostom ethicized this phrase: hallowed by our good works which correspond to God's good name (Matthew 5:16). If such works are lacking, God's name is defamed, "blasphemed" (Origen; Gregory of Nyssa; Peter Chrysologus, citing Romans 2:24).

c. "Your kingdom come"—not that God's eternal rule could be in doubt; rather, we pray that this rule may prevail "*in us* or *for us*," in our personal lives. Origen referred to Luke 17:20 and John 14:23 for the inwardness of the kingdom; Ambrose to John 19:37. The eschatological dimension is present here (as in some other writers) through the image of the spiritual warfare: We pray for God's rule of knowledge and wisdom to grow in us against the tyranny of the ruler of this world, the devil (Galatians 1:4; Romans 6:12). Quite clearly, however, the accent on the inward kingdom could be tempered or even overshadowed by apocalyptic kingdom-passages, especially Matthew 25:34 ("Then the king will say…Come you blessed…inherit the kingdom"): We pray for the final revelation of God's rule "soon" (Tertullian), "at the end" (Cyprian), in the resurrection (Chrysostom).

d. "Your will be done on earth as in heaven." The internalization of the petition ("…be done in us, by us") forced a metaphorical understanding of "heaven and earth." Closest to the primary meaning of the text was the phrase, "among angels and humans." The most frequent interpretation, however, was the anthropological division of flesh and spirit: We pray that not only our spirit but also the flesh may be brought into obedience to God. Cyprian thought of "unbelievers" and "saints":

[45] *Sermon on the Mount* II.10.36–37; cf. Jepsen, p. 124; *Sermon* 58:12; NPNF 6, p. 288.

We pray that unbelievers too may be lead to do the will of God. In this case, he argued, the petition also fulfills Jesus' injunction to pray for (= love) one's enemies. Augustine added a fourth option, Christ and the church, probably thinking of Ephesians 5:32. The accent was on fullness, unity, often the final, eschatological oneness of all things. Origen referred to 1 Corinthians 15:28 ("God all in all") and extended the phrase to the entire group of the three petitions, while Chrysostom stressed the implied call for action in the present: "Even before we reach heaven, we should turn the earth into heaven and live here in such a way as if we were there already" (XIX.5).

e. The most extensive commentary was normally reserved for the fourth petition: "Give us today our daily bread."[46] According to Tertullian, it opens the second part of the Prayer which concerns this present life. Thus, the "simple" meaning of the bread as food for bodily sustenance was considered as one option by several writers. Tertullian already referred to Matthew 6:33 in this connection: "…all these things will be yours as well." Where the "simple" meaning was seriously discussed, however, "daily" and "today" suggested an important qualification: Christians should pray for no more than a modest diet, enough for the immediate needs of the day but nothing more—no riches, no luxuries (Gregory of Nyssa; Chrysostom). The context, Matthew 6:25–34, clearly enforced this admonition: "Do not worry about tomorrow." Cyprian cited Daniel in the lions' den, Elijah and the raven, as well as Luke 12:20–21 ("you fool, this very night…") as examples of God's care in daily needs. He added a diatribe against the dangers of wealth, quoting 1 Timothy 6:6–10 which is also cited by other writers, e.g., Chrysostom.

Matthew 6:33 with its call to give priority to the kingdom over "all these things" suggested the preference for a "spiritual" meaning of the petition. Since Tertullian, Cyprian, and Origen it was indeed the dominant interpretation. The biblical key here was John 6, especially 6:35 and 6:45–51, where Jesus identified himself as the "Bread of Life." Bread equals Jesus—several writers emphasized this general spiritual meaning: We pray for the nourishing presence of Christ in our life, the presence of the Word (Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen), which includes

[46] See W. Dürig, "Die Deutung der Brotbitte des Vaterunsers bei den lateinischen Vätern bis Hieronymus," *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 18 (1968): 77–86; "Die Exegese der vierten Vaterunser-Bitte bei Augustinus," ibid., 22 (1972): 49–61.

the "life-giving precepts of God" (Augustine). Augustine took care to note that the petition mentions bread only, not drink, as the spiritual food: The reason is that we can absorb bread only after breaking and chewing it. In the same way, "Scripture feeds the soul by being opened up and studied."[47] Tertullian already quoted Matthew 26:26 along with John 6: "This is my body." With this combination the eucharistic interpretation was always close at hand. Cyprian unfolded it broadly. It is present, though not conspicuous, even in Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and the other Eastern Fathers.

Western writers since Ambrose regularly appended an argument for daily communion, polemicizing against the supposed custom in the East to commune less frequently. Scholars are still unable to find much substantiation for this assertion.[48] The biblical support for the polemic is drawn from Job 1:5, Job's daily sacrifice for his children (Ambrose, Augustine) even though the argument seems to be triggered by the Old Latin translation of *epiousion* as *cottidianum*, daily, which may be indebted to the Lukan equivalent for *sēmeron*, today, which is *kath' hēmeran*.

The philological problem of the hapax legomenon *epiousios* was widely recognized. Origen discusses at length the two possible derivations of the word: It may be derived from *ousia*, substance, in which case it means the bread "which is best adapted to the reasonable nature and akin to it in its very substance," i.e., the *logos* of God. It may also be derived from *epienai*, in which case it refers to the "bread appropriate to the coming age which we ask God to give us by anticipation now." Origen regarded the first option as "better," probably because of the connection with John 6.[49] Many authors followed him in this preference (Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cassian, even Ambrose—despite his Bible's Latin translation in the temporal sense only).

Jerome enriched the philological discussion.[50] Following Origen, he translated *epiousios* as *supersubstantialis*, but tried to bolster this meaning by referring to the Hebrew equivalent *sogolla* (*segullah*) for the similar term *periousios* in Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2, etc., rendered as *exairetos*, chosen, excellent, special, by Symmachus. In passing, he also referred to the Aramaic equivalent *mahar* in the fourth petition according

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[47] *Sermon on the Mount* II.10.37; cf. Jepsen, p. 125.

[48] B. Botte, *Ambroise de Milan: Des sacrements des mystères*, Sources chrétiennes, 25 (Paris, 1949), p. 19.

[49] XXVII.7–9, 13; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, pp. 298–300, 302.

[50] *Commentary on Matthew*, 1, on Mt. 6:11; CCSL 77, p. 37.

to the Gospel of the Nazarenes which he translated as *crastinus*, "for tomorrow," "future," echoing Origen's second option.

Origen also discussed the term *sēmeron*, today, in a lengthy discourse—one of the famous passages where he developed his notion of sequential eons which would lead to a final *apokatastasis pantōn*; "I know not how," he added.[51] For him, *sēmeron* refers to this present eon in the form of "one day at a time and every day." In a similar way, Augustine saw "today" as a reference to our present, earthly realm where there still is "time" (Hebrews 3:13, "as long as it is called today"), while Ambrose pointed to Hebrews 13:8 in order to coordinate "daily" and "today." Where the simple, material interpretation of the bread prevailed, "today" meant "only today": "Since you do not know whether you will be alive the next day, why do you worry about it?" (Chrysostom).

f. The Lukan parallel strongly suggested the identity of "debts" and "sins" in the fifth petition. While acknowledging this conclusion from the parallel evidence, Origen tried to develop the notion of debt as the basis for the apparent reciprocity in the petition: We owe many debts to many people, and many people owe us specific debts.[52] Origen seems to argue for recognizing the net of mutual obligations and for a more lenient attitude toward others as the rational way of dealing with each other in society. Luke's wording of the reciprocity clause ("for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us") seems to guide this interpretation, but also Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:21–35, the most important cross-reference in the interpretation of this petition. This parable kept the primary financial context of the term "debts" vividly before the eyes of the interpreter. In combination with the strong injunction of Matthew 6:14 ("if you forgive others…"), it encouraged most exegetes to emphasize our obligation to forgive as a condition for God's forgiveness of *our* sins. Chrysostom notes that Matthew 6:14, the verse immediately following the Lord's Prayer in Matthew, takes up this one petition only. Apparently it makes a central point: "The beginning therefore is our duty, and in our hands rests our own judgment" (Matthew 7:1–2). Cyril of Jerusalem is even more direct: "It is a contract with God when we pray that he may pardon our sins as we forgive our neighbors their debts." Even Augustine's exegesis seems to stand in this tradition: We must pray for the forgiveness of

[51] XXVII.13–16; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, pp. 302–305.
[52] XXVIII.1–6; ibid., pp. 305–308.

our sins and must forgive others in order to deserve such forgiveness.[53] According to him, the petition includes no less than four elements: the reminder of our continued sinfulness; of the necessity of baptism; of the need for the prayer of forgiveness for post-baptismal sins; and of the duty to forgive others, if not our enemies, then at least those who ask our forgiveness—a reference to Matthew 18:29.

g. For the vast majority of interpreters, the sixth petition could not mean that we pray to be spared temptation altogether. Biblical cross-references were all too clear about the fact that temptation is a constant reality in human life: "Is not all human life a place of temptation on earth?" (Job 7:1 LXX; Origen; Chrysologus). Augustine, who regarded temptation as an important ingredient, even a potential blessing (James 1:12) in the pilgrimage of this life, distinguished the temptations experienced by Joseph, Susanna, Job, Peter, the disciples (Luke 22:46, Tertullian), from those of Cain and Judas.[54] This indicates the general direction in which the interpretations move: We pray that we may stand firm, not be overcome by temptation; James 1:13–14 seemed to establish that God does not tempt; the devil does, although with divine permission (Tertullian; Cyprian). Cyprian made the necessary change in the wording of the petition itself: "Do no allow us to be led into temptation" (also Ambrose). God may allow such temptations as tests for his saints in order to prove their faith and virtues (Abraham: Genesis 22:1; Job; Paul: 2 Corinthians 4:7–9, 12:8–10; Jesus himself). For Origen, 1 Corinthians 10:13 marks the limits of our temptations, and while it is "impossible" not to be tempted, it is possible not to succumb to them like Jesus who "looked through the lattice" of our imprisonment and says to our soul: "Arise, my love, . . . and come away" (Song of Songs 2:9–10).[55]

h. In line with the interpretation of the sixth petition, most writers read "*apo tou ponērou*" in the seventh petition as a masculine noun: "deliver us from the evil one," the devil. Again, Origen could invoke the image of the valiant fight of the Christian saint, Job being the prime example as he proved the devil a liar. Chrysostom noted that the petition uses the singular, not the plural (*ponērōn*); the devil is the cause of all evil, not by nature, but as the epitome of the misuse of

[53] *Sermon* 56.13; NPNF 6, p. 278.
[54] *Sermon on the Mount* II.9.30–32; Jepsen, pp. 118–120.
[55] XXIX.9; Oulton and Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, p. 314.

free will and malice against the human race. Augustine sees the depth of this last petition in its ability to sum up in one phrase the entire meaning of prayer as our call for deliverance from the depth of human experience:

> When we say 'Deliver us from evil,' we admonish ourselves to consider that we are not yet enjoying that bliss in which we will experience no evil. This last petition is so comprehensive that Christians, whatever affliction they may experience, can give words to their inward groans and vent to their tears. They may begin this petition, go on with it, and with it conclude all prayer.[56]

VII

In his entire exegesis of the Lord's Prayer, Augustine demonstrates in a powerful way how strongly the vision of a unified biblical witness really governs all the details of the interpretation. For him, every line of the language of Scripture in all its limitation is full of mysteries which can and should be sought out. It is well known how deep an interest he had in biblical numerology. Finding significant numbers and numerical relations in Scripture meant lifting its ambiguous language into a realm of much less ambiguity, a language closer to the reality of creation, and thus of the creator. The structure of Jesus' entire Sermon on the Mount, he suggested, is governed by the seven makarisms (if one counts the eighth as a "repetition" of the first). They correspond to the seven gifts of the Spirit (Isaiah 11:2–3).[57] Augustine's interpretation of the Lord's Prayer comes in the exposition of the sixth makarism ("blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God"), its own seven petitions (three, the number of God's world, plus four, the number of our world) marvelously coordinated with the seven makarisms. What they teach is the sevenfold ascent to God, the *perfectus vitae Christi modus*, which leads us to our final goal with the help of the Spirit.

If we take seriously the hermeneutical presuppositions of this form of exegesis which is shared by all patristic writers, it becomes clear that this paper could not present a developmental picture of the patristic interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. Even if the varieties, the interdependencies, and the nuances could be spelled out more fully in each case,

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[56] *Letter* 130.XI.21; NPNF 1, p. 466.
[57] *Sermon on the Mount*, I.3.10–4.11; Jepsen, pp. 16–20.

they would reflect an enrichment of the recognized store of applicable biblical cross-references, not a change in scope. *Scriptura sui ipsius interpres*: scripture is its own interpreter. Underlying all the personal theological accents and catechetical or liturgical agendas which are present in the writings of our authors, this, it seems to me, is the "principle" of the patristic exegesis of the Lord's Prayer.

CHAPTER THREE

PIETY AND PROCLAMATION: GREGORY OF NYSSA'S SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Michael Joseph Brown

Proclaiming a Political Piety

Sermons are a species of pastoral theology. They are broad-ranging rhetorical expressions on the nature of the Christian witness of faith that have undergone some degree of critical analysis. Unlike systematic theology, the pastoral task of preaching is not a simple matter of sustained reflection on the witness of faith as such.[1] It is an interpretation or application of theological claims in the daily lives of believers. Schubert Ogden defines such a practical theology in this manner, it "properly asks what one is to do in the particular situation in and for which one must here and now take responsibility if one is to actualize . . . a Christian self-understanding."[2] In this sense, every sermon is distinctive and historically situated. Still, a sermon attempts to a greater or lesser degree to provide a meaningful context for present human activity by demonstrating or declaring that such activity is congruent with the aims of the transcendent as outlined in a sustained and deliberate reflection on the Christian witness.

Gregory of Nyssa's sermons on the Lord's Prayer are a provocative attempt to join such proclamation with emerging Nicene theology around the subject of pious practice. In itself, this is a complex task. What makes Gregory's sermons even more daring is that they attempt

[1] By the terms "witness of faith," "Christian witness," "Christian witness of faith," and the like, I am employing the work of Schubert Ogden, who argues that "the Christian witness of faith can become the object of theological understanding insofar as it indirectly becomes the subject of such understanding as well. To this extent, there is a sound basis for the traditional formula in which theology is succinctly defined as *fides quaerens intellectum*," Schubert Ogden, *On Theology* (San Francisco, 1986), p. 2.

[2] Ogden, *On Theology*, p. 97.

to speak to the specific context of his congregation, which provides us with a glimpse into the social topography that confronted a gifted Christian rhetorician and ecclesiastical leader in the fourth century. Each sermon then tells us something about Gregory's theology and its application directly as well as something about the bishop's community and its social construction indirectly. As defined by Douglas Sturm, the "polity is the inclusive form of coordinated activity among persons and groups that incorporates more or less adequately the conditions and qualities of civilization: truth, beauty, art, adventure, peace."[3] Adopting this definition for heuristic purposes, Gregory's sermons constitute a form of Christian civic discourse that cast a vision of polity that he believed to be congruent with the teleological aim of God derived from the Christian witness of faith.[4]

A Transformed Political Context and a Precarious Social Structure

Gregory of Nyssa, as well as other bishops in the fourth century, confronted a different social context than their predecessors. Unlike Christians of earlier periods, their religion was now an object of imperial favoritism. The church had not only become the recipient of a great deal of governmental largesse, but scrutiny as well. The Christian community was forced to define itself and its function in a society where Christians still comprised only a portion of the populace. It did this by carving out a social niche, concern for the poor.

Jesus reportedly said, "For you always have the poor with you" (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8 NRSV).[5] The church made this group its concern. To do this, the church developed a renewed vision of its founder. Drawing from texts such as 2 Corinthians 8:9, the church developed the doctrine of the poverty of Christ and his apostles. This distinctive understanding of the incarnation maintained that Christ not only condescended to being human, but also took on the mantle of

[3] Douglas Sturm, *Community and Alienation: Essays on Process Thought and Public Life* (Notre Dame, 1988), p. 42.

[4] I define Gregory's sermons as a form of civic discourse because they have a great deal in common with deliberative rhetoric, at least as defined by Aristotle.

[5] It is interesting, but entirely consistent, that Luke would leave out this statement attributed to Jesus.

human poverty in order to make himself "directly available, as a human being, to the 'cry of the poor.'"[6] Gregory expresses this perspective in one of his sermons on the Beatitudes,

> What greater poverty is there for God than the form of a servant? What more humble for the King of creation than to share in our poor nature? The Ruler of rulers, the Lord of lords put on voluntarily the garb of servitude. The Judge of all things becomes a subject of governors; the Lord of creation dwells in a cave; He who holds the universe in His hands finds no place in the inn, but is cast aside into the manger of irrational beasts. The perfectly Pure accepts the filth of human nature, and after going through all our poverty passes on to the experience of death. Look at the standard by which to measure voluntary poverty![7]

This powerful image of Jesus as a beggar, the king of glory wrapped in the garments of destitution, was one employed deftly by Gregory and other Christian leaders. The church's social function—the contribution it made to the larger society whether Christian or not—was its concern for those with whom its founder demonstrated solidarity. Even if poverty were an intractable aspect of community life, the church argued, we can see Jesus in the face of the poor.

Much has been said regarding the economic situation of the fourth century C.E., but the emerging consensus appears to be that assertions of economic collapse, or at the very least chronic economic instability, say more than the entirety of the available evidence supports. Statements, such as the one made by the eminent historian, Michael Rostovtzeff, are characteristic of the older mainline view,

> The depreciation of money was closely connected with the rise in prices and products of prime necessity. No statistics are available, but the investigations of thousands of papyri shows clearly, at least for Egypt, how ruinous was the rise in prices in the third century [and later] and how unstable they were all through the century, and especially during

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[6] Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures; Hanover, 2002), p. 93.

[7] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, Johannes Quasten and Joseph C. Plumpe eds., trans. by Hilda C. Graef, ACW 18 (New York, 1954), p. 91. See also, Tamsin Jones Farmer, "Revealing the Invisible: Gregory of Nyssa on the Gift of Revelation," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005), 67–85; Morwenna Ludlow, "Theology and Allegory: Origen and Gregory of Nyssa on the Unity and Diversity of Scripture," International Journal of Systematic Theology 4 (2002), 45–66; Brian E. Daley, "Divine Transcendence and Human Transformation: Gregory of Nyssa's Anti-Apollonarian Christology," *Modern Theology* 18 (2002), 497–506.

> the second half of it, as compared with the relatively stable prices of the second century.[8]

This picture of inflation gone wild demands a great deal of scrutiny. Rostovtzeff admits that no "statistics are available." More recent investigations, like the ones conducted by Roger Bagnall, give a more balanced treatment:

> The results are visible in the papyri chiefly in the vast numbers appearing as the prices of goods and services as the century wears on.... It is hard to believe than an economy would not be drastically and adversely affected by it. But the economy of fourth-century Egypt was not like the modern one.... The economy, based on wheat and other agricultural commodities, continued to function.[9]

Of course, poverty was a persistent social problem throughout the history of the Roman Empire. Yet, as Bagnall points out, we are mistaken if we think that a rise in prices indicates clearly an economy on the verge of collapse, one awash in the newly created poor. Here the distinction made by Paul Slack and others between "shallow" and "deep" poverty may be appropriate.[10] Persons living in the Roman Empire, even at its height, hovered above an "ocean of scarcity."[11] For many in the Roman world, especially those of "middling" status, the fear of poverty loomed large.[12] Fear of destitution was especially true when it came to the acquisition of food.[13] In truth, individuals could fall into poverty for any number of reasons: illness, death in the family, economic and fiscal oppression, or from violence in its various manifestations. At any moment, for any number of reasons, an individual in the Roman world could slip from the ranks of the wage earners to the destitute. Peter Brown makes this apparent when he says, "In terms of the average person's expectations of success and failure, it was a society made up of countless *paupérisables*."[14]

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[8] M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1941), p. 419.

[9] Roger S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993), p. 331.

[10] See the discussion in Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 13–17. The specific reference is to Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988), pp. 38–40.

[11] Aldo Schiavone, *The End of the Past: Ancient Rome and the Modern West* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000), p. 69.

[12] See e.g., my discussion of indebtedness in Brown, *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes: A Window into Early Christianity* (New York, 2004), pp. 21–23.

[13] See Brown, *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes*, pp. 17–21.

[14] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 15.

Inflation or price increases, notwithstanding, the truth of the matter is that countless individuals lived on the precipice of destitution. To put it another way, an individual could go from "rags to riches," back to "rags," and up again to "riches," given that we must not consider "riches" to mean wealth as much as something other than abject poverty. Few, it appears, would have understood themselves as *ptōchos*, the classical Greek term for the "cringing beggar." The so-called famine that confronted Gregory's brother, Basil, serves as a pointed example of the precarious nature of ancient life. Sometime around 368 or 370 C.E., a food shortage struck the region of Caesarea, the city of which Basil was to be bishop.[15] It was the result of the panic of the rich at the shortage of rain and snow during the previous winter. Faced with a shortage of indefinite length, the rich refused to make available the grain they had stored in their barns—possibly because they thought they could make huge profits, possibly out of fear. Nevertheless, the food shortage brought hordes of the destitute and newly destitute to the gates of the city. In response, Basil preached a series of sermons that ultimately convinced the stockpilers to open their storehouses. A simple food shortage, a consequence of nature, almost brought a city to its knees. The Lord was most certainly correct in his understanding of the precarious nature of ancient life.

Although ideas of economic collapse in the fourth century are overstated, it is undeniable that the "poor" occupy a great deal of Christian preaching in the late empire. In fact, it may be correct to say that it was through the social imagination of the Christian clergy that the "poor" became a recognizable social category at all. Through their sermons, Christian leaders like Gregory of Nyssa cast a vision of the polity that recognized the anonymous masses of those who were destitute, the nameless grey masses that had always occupied the fringes of society. The Christian leadership gave these people a face. It was that of Jesus. By highlighting the plight of the poor, the church found its voice in the larger social enterprise. This was not altogether the result of Christian appropriation of the poverty of Christ. The church received substantial imperial exemptions and donations as well. With imperial largesse also came imperial scrutiny. As Brown says, "It would be the state, and not only the local congregation, that would now watch the Christian clergy carefully, to ensure that they made use

[15] See the discussion in Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, pp. 39–41.

of the support that had been offered to them with such generosity."[16] Almost overnight, bishops became powerful patrons, distributing food, money, and other goods through a new, although rapidly maturing, system of relief. With their new found wealth, Christian bishops were able to change the face of the Roman landscape. Most notably, they constructed the "poor house" (*xenodocheion*). Yet, the destitute were not the only ones classified as "poor" by the church.

The "poor" included the Christian clergy as well. The doctrine adopted by the church was not just the poverty of Christ, but the poverty of Christ and his apostles. What made the church different from many other religious institutions in the Roman world was that its leadership was not drawn, for the most part, from the leisured class. Clergy renounced whatever occupations they had previously pursued and lived, like the poor, on the gifts of others. "In pursuing their dedication," Brown maintains, "they expected to receive encouragement, protection, even [eventually] regular financial support from their fellow believers, on whose behalf they were engaged in time-consuming religious activity."[17] The beginnings of this practice can be seen in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul. We are told in Acts 4:34 that there was not a needy person among the believers in Jerusalem. Later, the apostles decide to devote themselves entirely to their ministerial duties by appointing deacons (Acts 6:1–6). The rationale for this growth in the ranks of leadership is stated by the Twelve: "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6.4). Likewise, the apostle Paul tells the church in Corinth, "Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:13–14). They were the notional "poor," because their commitment to the ministry virtually precluded any possibility for other types of employment. In reality, the situation among early Christian clergy was more complex. Some, like Paul, worked from time to time to support themselves, but the practice had been put in place nevertheless. Included in the church's "care of the poor" was the maintenance of its clergy.

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[16] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 29.
[17] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 22.

The vulnerable, regardless of actual economic status, were included among the "poor" as well. Christian leaders adopted a Near Eastern model of society that understood the "poor" to be those who had claims upon the powerful. This can be seen most pointedly in the case of widows.[18] Even in the earliest Christian texts, concern for these women, vulnerable to slipping into the ranks of the destitute can be seen (see e.g., Acts 6:1–6; 1 Timothy 5:3–16). Widows, it also appears, were a vocal group of claimants.[19] They repeatedly pushed the church to remain sensitive to their needs. More often than not, widows were not among the destitute. They were persons who, because of the death of their primary protectors, found themselves vulnerable to the danger of impoverishment. In a similar manner, others in the community also appealed to the church to protect them from the vagaries of a precarious social establishment. In short, when Christian leaders spoke of their care for the "poor" they meant much more than those who were financially destitute. They were, in fact, advocates for all of those who stood to lose at the hands of an often callous society.

Each of Gregory's five sermons points to the relation between individual piety and community life. This relation is not readily apparent in the first two sermons, although it is there nonetheless. The first sermon argues that the practice of piety leads to divine *apatheia*, and that prayer, in particular, cultivates apathy in the person praying. The social connection here resides in the human preoccupation with material acquisition as well as the human capacity to resist and surpass the emotions. Similarly, the second sermon argues that one cannot address God in prayer unless one participates in the divine nature. The civic component in this homily is expressed most directly when Gregory says, "May I become through Thy help blameless, just and pious, may I abstain from every evil, speak the truth, and do justice." The final three sermons address more directly the relationship between individual pious practice and life in the polity.

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[18] See the discussion in Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, pp. 58–60.

[19] See J. Bremmer, "Pauper or Patroness? The Widow in the Early Church," in *Between Poverty and the Pyre, Moments in the History of Widowhood*, J. Bremmer and L. van den Bosch, eds., (London, 1995), pp. 31–57.

The Political Landscape and its Ancient Ideas of Piety

Before pursuing a more detailed examination of these sermons it may be prudent to describe, in a cursory fashion, the different connections various ethnoreligious groups made between piety and political action. In broad terms, one can say that Greco-Romans differed from Jews (and later Christians) in their understandings of piety and its attendant practices. Judaism held, alongside sacrifice, three acts as cultically important: fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. To put it another way, Judaism understood these acts to be important to and commanded by the deity. For example, Tobit 12:8–10 says,

> Prayer with fasting is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than wealth with wrongdoing. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. For almsgiving saves from death and purges away every sin. Those who give alms will enjoy a full life, but those who commit sin and do wrong are their own worst enemies.

Such an understanding of these acts as cultic obligations can be found throughout the Old Testament. To be sure, concern for the marginalized (e.g., widows, strangers, and orphans) was enshrined in the Pentateuch and addressed at crucial times in the prophetic literature. Later, Christians would adopt this concern as part of their appropriation of the Old Testament. More pointedly, however, the followers of Jesus had a tradition of concern for the destitute that went back to their founder, one that was assiduously applied by the apostle Paul. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus identifies acts on behalf of the disenfranchised as the basis for eschatological judgment:

> Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me . . . Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me (Matthew 25:34–36, 40).

Likewise, it was the apostle Paul who coined the now classic phrase the "cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). According to Peter Brown, the " 'cheerful giver' was a person prepared to make sacrifices for the sake

of the community."[20] Paul tells his Galatian readers that he took on the task of caring for the "poor" eagerly (Galatians 2:10).[21] In doing so, he, like Jesus, validated a practice that made concern for the community, most particularly its vulnerable members, a cultic obligation. The infusion of this peculiarly Jewish practice into the growing non-Jewish Christian community constituted a challenge, if not a revolution, to individuals for whom the care of others had no cultic significance whatsoever. Unlike Jesus, at least as far we can determine, Paul addresses his statements to a group of communities financially capable of sharing their resources with others. Moreover, Paul is careful not to push the practices of these communities radically beyond the respectable confines of ancient patronage. As Brown describes Paul's strategy, "These [Pauline Christians] were relatively well-to-do, settled persons, who lived in large cities, such as Corinth, Ephesus, and Philippi. Paul's message to them can be summed up as a form of *Liebespatriarchalismus*. His ideal was that of a 'loving' community made up of benevolent and generous householders."[22] He goes on to say, "Social distinctions between rich and poor, between slaves and masters were accepted, but they were to be softened by generous giving and by gentle dealings."[23] In short, Jesus and Paul, as well as some others whose voices have been canonized, implanted in this new movement—one that quickly left the confines of Hellenistic Judaism—a practice of cultic piety that had a distinctively social dimension, one that would flourish into a full-fledged revolution in Greco-Roman thinking on euergetism and its civic importance.

Greeks and Romans had a long tradition of civic benefaction (euergetism). This desire to "do good" through public generosity, at times also known as *philotimia* (love of honor), was esteemed greatly among elites of the classical world. Generally, such generosity was memorialized by inscriptions on altars, colonnades, buildings and the like. That is, for the Greco-Romans public generosity was something pre-eminently

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[20] Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 18. See also Leander Keck, "The Poor among the Saints in Jewish Christianity and Qumran," *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 57 (1966), 54–78, and E. Bruck, "Ethics v. Law: Saint Paul, the Fathers of the Church and the 'Cheerful Giver' in Roman Law," *Traditio* 2 (1944), 97–121.

[21] This statement is one notoriously difficult to parse. It is not clear that Paul here is advocating care of the poor qua poor, but most likely the members of the Jerusalem church, including its leadership. More will be said regarding the construction of the Jerusalem leadership as the "poor" later in this essay.

[22] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 19.

[23] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 19.

written in stone. Take, for example, the stele honoring one Kleanax, *prytanis* of the city of Kyme, who "provided many great benefits for his city continuously throughout his lifetime."[24] As outlined, Kleanax provided for his city in four ways: 1. supplying the necessities for sacrifices, 2. providing banquets for large numbers of people, 3. providing civic entertainment, and 4. financing traditional city festivals.[25] Through these benefactions, Kleanax secured the honor of his family as well as his status as one of the city's leading citizens. Plutarch may have said it best, "Most people think that to be deprived of the chance to display their wealth is to be deprived of wealth itself."[26] Euergetism then in its classical formulation was a practice quite distinct from that found in Judaism and the early Christian movement. It was a form of benefaction provided for the benefit of the city and its citizens, each being understood quite broadly. Kleanax's support of religious observances did not amount to a recognition of cultic obligation, rather it was a means of garnering honor in the polity that was widespread among local and imperial elites.

This is not to say that Jews and Christians did not participate in the construction of the physical environment. They certainly did. Wealthy Jews, for example, contributed to the construction and maintenance of synagogues and other buildings, most notably the renovation of the Temple in Jerusalem prior to its destruction. Likewise, evidence suggests that a Christian named Erastus, an individual mentioned in Paul's letter to the Romans, donated the paving of the courtyard east of the theater in Corinth (Romans 16:23).[27] Nevertheless, unlike other members of their communities, Jews and Christians carried a cultic obligation to look after others, more specifically members of their own synagogues and churches (see e.g., Galatians 6:10).

The identification of an individual as *euergetēs tou dēmou* is not entirely foreign to a Greco-Roman understanding of piety. Often inscriptions cited the zeal, virtue, or piety of those being honored for their benefactions. *Pietas*, among the Romans, meant conformity and adherence to

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[24] "A Civic Benefactor of the First Century in Asia Minor," §10, R. A. Kearsley, *NewDocs* 7, S. R. Llewelyn, ed., Macquarie, NSW: Macquarie University Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, 1994), pp. 233–236.

[25] See the discussion in *NewDocs* 7:236–239.

[26] Quoted in Ramsay MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations 50 B.C. to A.D. 284* (New Haven, 1974), p. 62.

[27] See the discussion in Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven, 1984), pp. 58–59.

an established network of relationships. The *pius* Roman was one who devoted his attention to maintaining the proper order of things.[28] Polybius, an outside interpreter of Roman practice, observed that Roman *pietas* influenced all aspects of their society, even their governance. He wrote, "Roman magistrates and legates behave properly, even when they are dealing with huge sums of money, simply because they have pledged their faith by oath" (*Historiae* 6.56.14).[29] Roman observance of these relationships can be found even in their correspondence with other nations: "The fact that we have, absolutely and consistently, placed reverence towards the gods as of the first importance is proved by the favour we have received from them on this account. In addition, we are quite certain for many other reasons that our high respect for the divine has been evident to everybody" (*IGR* iv.1557; *Sylloge* 601).[30] In other words, civic benefaction would be an outgrowth of Roman reverence for the *pax deorum*, the state or order of harmony and cooperation that freed humanity from the anxiety of disorder. *Pietas*, which meant adherence to the practices that maintain the *pax*, would dictate that certain acts be overtly cultic. This is seen most pointedly in Augustus' political autobiography. "After my victory," he writes, "I replaced in the temples of all the cities of the province of Asia the ornaments which my former enemy, after looting those temples, had taken for his private use" (*Res gestae divi Augustus* 24).[31] In this instance, *pietas* was a matter of restoration. By providing for the temples looted by Marc Antony, as well as building new temples, Augustus demonstrates that classical euergetism could border on cultic obligation. What is noticeably absent is a discrete connection between *pietas*, euergetism, and flesh-and-blood individuals.

The Greek understanding of *eusebeia*, like the Roman concept of *pietas*, meant more often than not the proper performance or maintenance of traditional customs. Quite often, these practices had strong cultic connections. A potent example can be found in Ptolemaic Egypt. The Greco-Macedonian conquerors of Egypt maintained and promoted the ancient religious practices of the people, even attempting at times to

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[28] For a more detailed discussion see Brown, *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes*, pp. 52–60.

[29] Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, eds., *Religions of Rome*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1998), 2:351.

[30] Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 2:350.

[31] Ronald Mellor, ed., *The Historians of Ancient Rome* (New York, 1997), p. 361.

bridge the divide that separated Greek religion from Egyptian religion. This was done primarily through various acts of civic benefaction. Take, for example, a famous decree of Ptolemy III, which reads in part,

> Whereas King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoe the Brother-and-Sister Gods, and Queen Berenike, his sister and wife, the Benefactor Gods, continually bestow many and great benefactions on the temples in the country and increase ever more the honors of the gods, and in Apis and for Mnevis and for the other renowned sacred beasts of the country; and the king marched out and brought back safe to Egypt the sacred images, which had been carried out from the country by the Persians, and returned them to the temples whence each had originally been taken away… (*OGIS* 56).[32]

Again, restoration functioned as an outgrowth of *eusebeia*, one that brought about public benefaction. Interestingly, the best preserved Egyptian temple that exists in modern Egypt is the temple of Edfu, begun by Ptolemy III and completed about 170 years later in the reign of Ptolemy XII. Such dedication to preserving cultic practices through civic benefaction is but one example of the Ptolemaic practice of *eusebeia.* In truth, in contrast to its Latin counterpart, *eusebeia* as a concept resided more in the cultic realm than in the ethical one. In this, it holds a greater affinity to the Judeo-Christian understanding of piety than does Roman *pietas.* Again, what is missing is any discrete connection to real life individuals.

Greco-Roman euergetism did, as a matter of course, affect the lives of real individuals. Through the construction and maintenance of public space, ancient benefactors undoubtedly made life better for countless unnamed people. More specifically, their support of cultic festivals, although arguably prompted more from a desire for personal aggrandizement than altruism, demonstrates that substantive philanthropy was not absent in the ancient world. One cannot fail to be impressed by the magnitude of some forms of ancient generosity. Augustus, for example, calculated that he spent 100 million sesterces on the building of several temples (*Res gestae divi Augustus* 21). Ronald Mellor wrote of Augustus' expenditures:

> The sum of money that [Augustus] gave to the treasury or to the Roman *plebs* or to discharged soldiers was 2,400,000,000 sesterces. He built these

[32] Roger S. Bagnall and Peter Derow, *Greek Historical Documents: The Hellenistic Period* (SBLSBS 16; Atlanta, 1981), p. 223.

> new structures: the temples of Mars, of Jupiter the Thunderer and the Subduer, of Apollo, of the deified Julius, of Quirinus, of Minerva, of Queen Juno, of Jupiter Libertas, of the Lares, of the Di Penates, of the Youth, of the Great Mother, the Lupercal, the imperial box at the Circus, the Senate House with the Chalcidicum, the Forum Augustum, the Basilica Julia, the theater of Marcellus, the Octavian portico, the grove of the Caesars beyond the Tiber. He restored the Capitol and sacred buildings to the number of eighty-two, the theater of Pompey, the aqueducts and the Via Flaminia. The expenditure that he devoted to dramatic shows, to gladiatorial contests, to athletic games and hunts and the sea battle, and the money granted to colonies, cities, towns destroyed by earthquake and fire, or to individual friends and senators to whose property requirement he contributed, are incalculable.[33]

Of course, the extent of Augustus' generosity was far beyond that of even the wealthiest provincial, but his euergetism undoubtedly set a standard that others tried to imitate. It is a style that can be seen in his great-grandson, Gaius, who upon ascension to the imperial throne provided the Roman populace with a feast of over 160,000 beasts over three months.[34]

To summarize our discussion thus far, Gregory of Nyssa's sermons on the Lord's Prayer are emblematic of a change in Greco-Roman thinking about euergetism. Along with other Christian leaders, Gregory attempts to transform the thinking and practice of his congregants from one of personal aggrandizement to one that embraced a more distinctively Judeo-Christian vision of the polity. No doubt, Greeks and Romans had long established traditions of civic benefaction. Often such benefactions meant the generous support of various religious institutions. However, such cultic patronage, although it may have arisen from a religious impulse, was not a form of cultic obligation.

Proclaiming a Critique of Materialism

As a whole, Gregory's sermons critique a thorough-going culture of materialism that was part of the established church. From the very beginning, Gregory addresses the practices of individuals who are oriented toward profit and its accumulation. He says in his first sermon,

[33] Mellor, *The Historians of Ancient Rome*, p. 364.
[34] Mellor, *The Historians of Ancient Rome*, p. 371.

> For I see that in this present life men give their attention to everything else, one concentrating on this matter, another on that; but no one devotes his zeal to the good work of prayer. The tradesman rises early to attend to his shop, anxious to display his wares sooner than his competitors so as to get in before them, to be the first to attend to the customer and sell his stock…Thus all are equally keen on gain and anxious to be on the spot before their neighbours, and the hour for prayer is usurped by those things that hold their interest and is turned into time for trafficking…everyone devotes all his energy to the work he has in hand, forgetting completely the work of prayer because he thinks that the time he gives to God is lost to the work he has purposed to do. For the craftsman considers that the Divine assistance is quite useless for the work he has in hand.[35]

He goes on in his third sermon to identify those "committing idolatry for the sake of gain" as blasphemers, persons who could not have been initiated into God's mysteries "unless sinning was lawful for them."[36] Again, in his fourth sermon, Gregory equates materialism with idolatry. "Thus the Will of God effectively casts out a twofold idolatry," he proclaims, "that is to say, that concerning idols, and the greed of silver and gold, which the prophecy calls the idols of the Gentiles."[37] Although indirect, this emphasis on the constant accumulation of wealth best suits a congregation of merchant-types rather than the unquestionably wealthy.

Ancient sources indicate that profit was an important concern for the merchant class, who proudly asserted, "Profit is happiness!" (*CIL* 10.875).[38] Plutarch criticized Cato the Elder, a good Roman patrician, in his attitude toward profit. "[H]e certainly went too far," Plutarch maintained, "when he ventured once to declare that the man who deserved the highest praise, indeed who should be honoured almost as a god, was the one who at the end of his life was found to have added to his property more than he inherited" (*Cato Major* 21.6).[39] In Plautus' comedy *Mercator*, Charinus says of his father, who sold the family farm, "After life had left his father's body, he had sold the farm and with the money bought a ship of fifteen tons burden and marketed his cargoes of merchandise everywhere, till he had at length acquired the wealth

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[35] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, 21, 22.
[36] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, 49.
[37] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, 59.
[38] Jo-Ann Shelton, ed., *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*, 2nd ed., (Oxford, 1997), p. 135.
[39] Fik Meijer and Onno van Nijf, eds., *Trade, Transport and Society in the Ancient World: A Sourcebook* (New York, 1992), p. 70.

which he then possessed. I ought to do the same, if I were what I ought to be" (*Mercator* 70–74).[40] More often, merchants were not people of inherited wealth. The most famous literary example from the Roman period may be Trimalchio, an odd and tragic character in Petronius' *Satyricon*, who proclaimed,

> But nobody gets enough, never. I wanted to go into business. Not to make a long story of it, I built five ships, I loaded them with wine—it was absolute gold at the time—and I sent them to Rome. You'd have thought I ordered it—every single ship was wrecked. That's fact, not fable! In one single day Neptune swallowed up thirty million. Do you think I gave up? This loss honestly wasn't more than a flea-bite to me—it was as if nothing had happened. I built more boats, bigger and better and luckier, so nobody could say I wasn't a man of courage. You know, the greater the ship, the greater the confidence. Loaded them again—with wine, bacon, beans, perfumes and slaves. At this point Fortunata did the decent thing, because she sold off all her gold trinkets, all her clothes, and put ten thousand in gold pieces in my hand. This was the yeast my fortune needed to rise. What heaven wants, soon happens. In one voyage I carved out a round ten million. I immediately bought back all of my old master's estates. I built a house, I invested in slaves, and I bought up the horse trade. Whatever I touched grew like a honeycomb (*Satyricon* 76).[41]

In short, the desire for wealth was visibly central to the enterprise of the merchant class. These individuals, whose livelihoods were not tied directly to agriculture, were required to direct more than average attention to their businesses. The problem for Christian leaders, like Gregory, was that such attention too easily went beyond legitimate self-support into greed, an attitude evidenced in Trimalchio's pronouncement that "nobody ever gets enough."

The merchant's drive for profit was antithetical to the classical conception of wealth and its virtue. To be honest, many elites relied on slaves and freed persons to act as surrogates in matters of commerce, attempting to distance themselves—at least in terms of rhetoric—from the messy practice of acquiring wealth. Such rhetoric amounted to an ideology that dominated Greco-Roman society for centuries. What Cato had been bold enough to advocate, his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors were careful to consign to the realm of the unmentionable.

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[40] Meijer and Nijf, *Trade, Transport and Society in the Ancient World: A Sourcebook*, p. 70.
[41] Meijer and Nijf, *Trade, Transport and Society in the Ancient World: A Sourcebook*, p. 74.

Greco-Roman Critiques of Materialism

Early on, Greco-Romans elites advocated *autarkeia* (self-sufficiency) as a social ideal. Accumulating more than one's household needed was considered unnatural and potentially socially destructive. Aristotle, who distinguished between natural and unnatural household management, argued in the pre-imperial period, "But there is another kind of acquisition that is specially called wealth-getting, and that is so called with justice; and to this kind it is due that there is thought to be no limits to riches and property" (*Politica* 1256b40–1257a1).[42] The great Greek philosopher saw surplus as an unnatural phenomenon. *Khrēmatistikē* was divided into the natural, which meant those products necessary for the efficient working of the household, and the unnatural, which referred to those products that were exchangeable for other things.[43] What is ironic about Aristotle's notion of unnatural *khrēmatistikē* is that he maintains that it is properly deemed *khrēmatistikē*. If self-sufficiency constituted the ideal, what could be considered just about trade for profit?

According to Michael Davis, "The connection between the natural and the unnatural forms of *khrēmatistikē* seems to be growth."[44] He points back to Aristotle who contended that "with every article of property there is a double way of using it; both uses are related to the article itself, but not related to it in the same manner—one is peculiar to the thing and the other is not peculiar to it" (*Politica* 1257a6–8). The proper (i.e., peculiar) use of property is when it is used for itself, according to its intended function (*kath' auto*). This use of property is in line with the ideal of self-sufficiency. As he says, "For the amount of such property sufficient in itself [*autarkeia*] for a good life is not unlimited" (*Politica* 1256b31–33). What is natural for the use of property becomes unnatural when property is used as a commodity for the further accumulation of property. What mistakenly prompts such activity, Aristotle says, is an unlimited desire for life (*Politica* 1257b41–1258a2). As Davis relates, "Men make the mistake of thinking that the unlimited desire for life can be satisfied by an unlimited accumulation of the conditions for life."[45] Although the pursuit of wealth for its own sake is considered

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[42] Translation, Harris Rackham, Loeb Classic Library, vol. 21.

[43] For a more detailed discussion see Michael Davis, *The Politics of Philosophy: A Commentary on Aristotle's Politics* (Lanham, MD, 1996), p. 27.

[44] Davis, *Politics of Philosophy*, 28.

[45] Davis, *Politics of Philosophy*, 28.

unnatural by Aristotle, what makes it just is that it takes the individual outside of the household with its constraints and into the *polis* where the necessary condition for the good life, freedom, is possible. The growth of *khrēmatistikē* fuels the growth of the polity.

Aristotle presents us with a nuanced understanding of *khrēmatistikē* and materialism by demonstrating that in its unnatural form *khrēmatistikē* supports the cultivation of political life. This is not the same as blind support of materialism, however. Aristotle is clear that "there should be a limit to all riches," and that those individuals engaged in aggressive commerce are misguided (*Politica* 1257b32). "The cause of this state of mind," he says, "is that their interests are set upon life but not upon the good life; as therefore the desire for life is unlimited, they also desire without limit the means productive of life" (*Politica* 1257b41–1258a2). And so, while Aristotle concedes that some degree of commerce is necessary for civilization to exist, unbridled commerce distracts individuals from the pursuit of the good life toward a socially destructive materialism (e.g., his argument on usury, *Politica* 1258a39–1258b8).

In contrast, Cicero provides a straightforward (and arguably more relevant) viewpoint on the acquisition of wealth. As a Roman elite, he believed himself to be superior to those in the working class, those who labored for wages or sold the products of their own labor. In the Roman mind, agriculture was the one truly honorable form of labor. The ideal of the Roman farmer was one of romantic self-sufficiency. Tibullus expressed this quite clearly in his first elegy which begins, "Let another man heap up for himself the wealth of shining gold… Let my humble means lead me through a quiet life" (*Elegies* 1.1.1).[46] Nevertheless, the practice of commerce was not outside of Cicero's purview. He looks upon it with suspicion, particularly when the motive for it is greed. He says, "But, for the most part, people are led to wrongdoing in order to secure some personal end; in this vice, avarice is generally the controlling motive" (*de Officiis* 1.7.24).[47] He continues,

> …men seek riches partly to supply the needs of life, partly to secure the enjoyment of pleasure. With those who cherish higher ambitions, the desire for wealth is entertained with a view to power and influence and the means of bestowing favors; Marcus Crassus, for example, not long since declared that no amount of wealth was enough for the man who

[46] Jo-Ann Shelton, ed., *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (Oxford, 1997), p. 161.

[47] Trans. by Walter Miller, Loeb Classic Library, vol. 30.

> aspired to be the foremost citizen of the state, unless with the income from it he could maintain an army. Fine establishments and the comforts of life in elegance and abundance also afford pleasure, and the desire to secure it gives rise to the insatiable thirst for wealth. Still, I do not mean to find fault with the accumulation of property, provided it hurts nobody, but unjust acquisition of it is always to be avoided (*de Officiis* 1.8.25).

As an example of the unjust accumulation of wealth and power, Cicero points to Julius Caesar. Even the generosity of an individual like Caesar must be viewed with contempt. By "the standard of justice," he says, "all acts of kindness must be measured… those who injure one man, in order to be generous to another, are guilty of the same injustice as if they diverted to their own accounts the property of their neighbors" (*de Officiis* 1.14.42). Again, a somewhat nuanced view of materialism is advanced by this Latin thinker. Cicero, like Aristotle, appears to recognize that commerce is a necessary component of civilization. Still, he recognizes that the blind accumulation of wealth is pregnant with unjust consequences.

Greco-Roman elites understood that wealth and its accumulation was necessary for personal survival as well as the well-being of society generally. What disturbed individuals like Aristotle and Cicero was the motivating influence of greed upon the commercial enterprise. Thus an attitude of avarice was ascribed to the merchant class more than any other group. While the wealthy subscribed to an attitude of *autarkeia*, merchants like Trimalchio believed that "nobody ever gets enough." If Gregory's sermons in any way reflect the actual composition of his congregation, then it would be reasonable to assume that a good number of his hearers were merchant types. If not, then these sermons paint a vivid rhetorical vision of a society thoroughly immersed in materialism. In response to such avarice, Gregory said, "Through [the concupiscent element] the deadly disease of sin was introduced into human nature."[48]

Christian Critiques of Materialism before Gregory

Christianity, in fact, has a long and varied history with the subject of wealth. Certain segments of the movement appear to have idealized the

[48] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, 58.

"blessed poor." Such a perspective is encountered vividly in the gospel of Luke in which the impending birth of the messiah is proclaimed as a validation of the poor over the rich. "He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty" (Luke 1:51–53, NRSV). When the matter of inheritance is raised, the Lukan Jesus responds, "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions" (Luke 12:15). Later to his disciples he says, "Sell your possessions, and give alms" (Luke 12:33). Finally, in the Lukan understanding of the cost of discipleship, Jesus tells them "none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions" (Luke 14:33). The author of Luke-Acts is clear in his advocacy of anti-materialism, even his vision of the early Jerusalem church is one of communalism (Acts 4:32–35). In fact, the notion of euergetism with its status implications is considered inconsistent with a Lukan understanding of discipleship: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called [*euergetai*]. But not so with you" (Luke 22:25–26a).[49]

The Matthean Jesus, by contrast, appears to represent a segment of the Christian movement that sought to reconcile wealth with cultic obligations. Take, for example, such a benign statement as "go into your room and shut the door" (Matthew 6:6). It implies that one has sufficient space to separate from others in the household. Likewise, the practice of giving alms assumes that one lives far enough above a subsistence level to be able to share. By carefully exegeting Matthew's narrative, one is able to reconstruct a community behind that narrative that occupies a space above that of the peasantry. Matthew's audience is instructed to practice a form of inconspicuous piety. It is a manner of life that stands in stark contrast to Greco-Roman practices of euergetism, as it also incorporates a long-held Jewish concern for the marginalized. Hans Dieter Betz captures this distinction quite well when he says, "True piety, therefore, occurs inconspicuously, in contrast to false piety, which is done for the sake of ostentation."[50] As noted above, it is the Matthean Jesus who makes humanitarian acts toward others a

[49] Euergetism, by contrast, forms the background of Luke's portrayal of Christ as a benefactor in Acts 10:38. It may also be behind Peter's speech in Acts 4:9.

[50] Hans Dieter Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, Hermeneia Series, (Minneapolis, 1995), p. 343.

matter of eschatological import. Unlike Luke, Matthew does not reject the idea of benefaction outright. His rendition of Jesus' statement to his disciples leaves open the possibility of euergetism: "The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them" (Matthew 20:25). Further, in an unparalleled statement, Matthew's Jesus instructs his would-be disciples to perform good works (*kala erga*), leaving open the possibility that such works might include acts of euergetism; although without the personal aggrandizement that usually accompanied such acts. Pivotal to Matthew's understanding of a disciple's wealth is that its distribution should be understood as a cultic obligation done inconspicuously, giving "glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Clement of Alexandria represents yet another alternative Christian perspective on wealth. He clearly understands that there are those who valorize poverty as a commandment of the Lord, especially in parts of the New Testament. He says of such passages that "in our childishness we listened to them uncritically and mistakenly" (*Quis dive salvetur* 4).[51] "No," he maintains,

> we must not understand [Jesus'] words literally [lit. *sarkinōs*]…surely those that had the appearance of being delivered in simple form and for that reason were not questioned by the hearers, but which are of importance for the whole end of salvation, and are enveloped in wonderful and super-celestial depth of thought, should not be taken as they strike the careless ear (*Quis dive salvetur* 5).

When Jesus advises the rich young man to sell his possessions, we are mistaken if we think that he means earthly possessions (Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22). Clement says,

> It is not what some hastily take it to be, a command to fling away the substance that belongs to him and to part with his riches, but to banish from the soul its opinions about riches, its attachment to them, its excessive desire, its morbid excitement over them, its anxious cares, the thorns of our earthly existence which choke the seed of the true life. For it is no great or enviable thing to be simply without riches (*Quis dive salvetur* 11).

Poverty in itself is not a state of blessedness, maintains the Alexandrian. He says, "Those then who are poor…are miserable, being destitute of God, more destitute still of human possessions, and unacquainted with

[51] Translation, G. W. Butterworth, Loeb Classic Library, vol. 92.

God's righteousness" (*Quis dive salvetur* 17). In fact, poverty is contradictory to the Lord's command to practice charity (*Quis dive salvetur* 13). How can a disciple feed the poor without financial means? Clement thus proposes a notion of Christian stewardship that understands wealth as instrumental for the process of salvation:

> For he who holds possessions and gold and silver and houses as gifts of God, and from them ministers to the salvation of men for God the giver, and knows that he possesses them for his brothers' sakes rather than his own, and lives superior to the possession of them; who is not the slave of his possessions, and does not carry them about in his soul, nor limit and circumscribe his own life in them, but is ever striving to do some noble and divine deed; and who, if he is fated ever to be deprived of them, is able to bear their loss with a cheerful mind exactly as he bore their abundance—this is the man who is blessed by the lord and called poor in spirit, a ready inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, not a rich man who cannot obtain life (*Quis dive salvetur* 16).

The distribution of wealth, as in Matthew's gospel, is considered a cultic obligation. What is distinctive about Clement's perspective on wealth is that it does not require that the disciple be inconspicuous. Rather, Clement says, "You buy incorruption with money" (*Quis dive salvetur* 32). It is a form of discipleship that must be aggressive and on-going. As he says, "[A] friend is made not from one gift, but from complete relief and long companionship" (*Quis dive salvetur* 32). What is also distinctive about Clement's perspective on wealth is how much it mimics established Greco-Roman practices of patronage, although he cautions the wealthy not to make their own determinations regarding the worthiness of recipients (*Quis dive salvetur* 33). They should rather enlist a "man of God" as an advisor (*Quis dive salvetur* 41). In short, Clement's perspective on wealth adds another dimension to Christian views on materialism. He embraces the wealthy as potential agents of divine beneficence. Of course, they would have to undergo a process of ridding their souls of passion and attachment to their possessions. Nevertheless, Clement's warnings against greed are anemic in comparison to his argument that wealth can serve an instrumental purpose for the church and its mission.

Despite a diverse set of perspectives regarding wealth among segments of the Christian church, individual members gave. The apostle Paul, for example, organized a collection for the church in Jerusalem (see e.g., Romans 15:25–27). Likewise, the author of 1 Timothy makes reference to the church's support of widows and elders, something

almost undoubtedly funded through a collection (1 Timothy 5:3–19). We do not know just how much the church collected, nor do we know exactly how many received *sportulae* (gifts) from the offerings.[52] In some churches it must have been significant. At least it was enough to attract the attention of outsiders. Thus, the apologist Tertullian of Carthage felt compelled to make mention of it: "Even if there is a kind of treasury, it is not built up from money paid as an entrance fee to a religious belief which one could buy, as it were. Once a month, or whenever he wishes, each member gives a small coin, but only if he wishes and only if he can. For no one is compelled; the offering is voluntary" (*Apologeticum* 39.5).[53] Tertullian may be playing down the amounts donated by the faithful because the church quickly became an institutionalized source of charity (see *P.Wisc.* ii 64; *P.Oxy.* xvi 1954).[54] Moreover, individual Christians of wealth became involved in charitable endeavors, acting at times outside of the ecclesiastical structure but always on its behalf. Take, for example, the Egyptian Christian named Thekla who "frequently sent and bought much clothing and mats. She loaded her servants with these things and sent them throughout the whole city, distributing them to the poor and needy" (*The Martyrdom of Paese and Thekla*).[55] In addition, Thekla reportedly cooked and cared for those in prison as well as opening her home to the indigent. Christians were voluntarily using their wealth to fulfill Jesus' command to care for the disenfranchised as a matter of cultic obligation.

Whatever their detailed perspectives on materialism, Christians agreed on two things: 1. the disciples of Jesus had a cultic responsibility to share their wealth, and 2. followers of Jesus were to avoid the seductive enticement of greed. Clearly, the radical vision proposed by the author of Luke-Acts was not appropriated by many among the faithful. One might argue that *askēsis* (asceticism) is an example of the Lukan perspective enacted by certain members of the community. Surely, Saint Antony was prompted by Lukan and Lukan-like statements on wealth (curiously one of the texts explained away by Clement). Reportedly, he sold all of his possessions in contemplation of Matthew 4:20,

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[52] See Schöllen, *Die Anfänge der Professionalisierung des Klerus*, 55–56 and T. Mathews, "An Early Roman Chancel Arrangement and its Liturgical Uses," *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 38 (1962), 73–95.

[53] Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, p. 414.

[54] *P.Wisc* or the Wisconsin Papyri and *P. Oxy* or the Oxyrhynchus Papyri.

[55] Jane Rowlandson, ed., *Women and Society in Greek and Roman Egypt: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 75–76.

19:21 (or Luke 18:22), and Acts 4:35. Likewise, this story was told of Abba Theodore:

> Abba Theodore of Pherme had acquired three good books. He came to Abba Macarius and said to him, "I have three excellent books from which I derive profit; the brethren also make use of them and derive profit from them. Tell me what I ought to do: keep them for my use and that of the brethren, or sell them and give the money to the poor?" The old man answered him in this way, "Your actions are good; but it is best of all to possess nothing." Hearing that, he went and sold his books and gave the money for them to the poor.[56]

This narrative is strikingly similar to the gospel narrative of the rich young man (Matthew 19:16–22; Mark 10:17–22; Luke 18:18–23), and suggests that a perspective on materialism analogous to that presented in the Lukan writings was prominent in the monastic movement. In a similar fashion, there were most likely those in the church who adopted the Matthean perspective of inconspicuous righteousness. Far more, it appears, especially among the wealthy, appropriated Clement's understanding of Christian stewardship. Such an attitude laid the foundation for a peculiarly Christianized understanding of euergetism, one that saw benefaction as a cultic obligation with care of the poor as a central concern.

Gregory's Specific Critique of Materialism

Gregory's sermons address repeatedly the issue of materialism. Through them he makes practical as well as profoundly theological assertions. First, Gregory maintains that life cannot be a constant pursuit of wealth. He says, "In its desire for more, human nature gives itself no rest whatever where there is a chance of gain."[57] In such a way, human beings are drawn away from God, involving themselves "in the pursuit of material things."[58] This is why they do not see the purpose of prayer. It is time lost. In response, Gregory argues that prayer unites us to God, makes us intimate with our creator. Further, prayer is the only appropriate response to our divine benefactor. What Gregory is asking

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[56] *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (trans. by Benedicta Ward; Kalamazoo, 1975), p. 73.

[57] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 26.

[58] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 26.

his congregation to realize is that life without union with God through prayer can only lead to personal and social disorder. Thus he proclaims, "Through prayer we obtain physical well-being, a happy home, and a strong, well-ordered society."[59] And further, "Through [prayer] good prospers, evil is destroyed, and sinners will be converted."[60] Gregory is not advocating that they abandon their business enterprises entirely. What he is asking is that they in some way fuse the material and the spiritual (commerce and prayer), and that such a fusion would benefit both the individual and society.

In many respects, what Gregory advocates here would have been inconceivable to many. Leisure was in short supply. Most would have found it unthinkable that there would be time for higher pursuits like contemplation. Such things were only in the purview of the wealthy and their privileged clients. Joining these two worlds, at least from the perspective of most ancients, was impossible. As Brown says quite pointedly, "In the ancient world, toil and serious thought were held to be incompatible."[61] And yet, the bishop of Nyssa casts a vision that maintains that Christians, although they may not be able to engage in sustained contemplative thought, can pursue the higher things through prayer, and that this fusion of the spiritual and the material will course through the entire social structure. He says, "Whatever anyone may set out to do, if it is done with prayer the undertaking will prosper and he will be kept from sin, because there is nothing to oppose him and drag the soul into passion."[62]

Second, Gregory maintains that greed is idolatry. He says, "Covetousness enters together with trade; but covetousness is idolatry."[63] Greed is idolatrous because it distracts one from God and sets up a rival to God. In this, his words are reminiscent of passages such as Matthew 6:24: "You cannot serve God and wealth." Using a medical metaphor in his fourth sermon, Gregory describes greed as a disease that destroys the proper balance that should obtain in a human life. The cure for disease was its restoration. The idolatry of greed creates havoc in its wake. He says, "Hence arise feuds, occasions of evil and attacks on one another that often end in bloodshed and murder."[64] Another ecclesiastical leader,

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[59] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 24.
[60] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 24.
[61] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, pp. 21–22.
[62] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 23.
[63] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 22.
[64] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 23.

John Chrysostom, proclaimed something quite similar regarding such an idol, "Even in this life such idolatry trails immense harm in its path, with losses unspeakable. Think of the lawsuits! the harassments, the strife and toil and blinding of the soul" (*Homilia Matthaeum* 21.2).[65] In short, the idolatry of covetousness leads to social discord.

Third, Gregory holds that greed contributes to the misery of others. Although it has already become apparent that greed unleashes a horde of negative social consequences, the bishop is quite pointed in maintaining that greed destroys both the guilty and the guiltless. He says,

> For in order that none of these paraphernalia may be missing, one needs an income adequate for providing all these requirements. And so someone must weep, his neighbor must sorrow, many who are deprived of their property must be miserable, in order that their tears may contribute to enhance the ostentatious display of his table.[66]

He goes on to say when it comes to the petition for bread,

> For the bread of God is above all the fruit of justice, the ear of the corn of peace, pure and without any admixture of the seed of tares. But if you cultivate what is another's property, if you practice injustice and confirm your unjust gains by written documents, then you may indeed say to God: Give bread, but another will hear your plea, not God.[67]

Gregory is most pointed in this assertion when it comes to indebtedness. He says,

> You ask to have debts forgiven, how can you strangle your debtor? You pray that [God] may blot out what is written against you, and you preserve carefully the acknowledgments of those who owe you something? You ask to have your debts cancelled, but you increase what you have lent by taking interest? Your debtor is in prison, while you are in church? He is in distress on account of his debts, but you think it right that your debt should be forgiven? Your prayer cannot be heard because the voice of him who suffers is drowning it.[68]

By emphasizing the misery of the marginalized, Gregory is drawing attention to the plight of an otherwise anonymous group. Theologically, greed tarnishes the image of God in both parties. It distorts proper social arrangements. "You do not consider, when you are burning with

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[65] Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew 1–13*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Series, (Downers Grove, 2001), p. 144.
[66] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 66.
[67] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, pp. 67–68.
[68] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 80.

anger against your servant," he says, "that it is not nature, but power that has divided [humanity] into servants and masters."[69]

Finally, Gregory asserts that the only cure for this disease of the soul is prayer, because only through prayer can the individual be restored to a life of material simplicity. Only through prayer—union with God—can human beings be restored to their proper natures. It is union with God that "gradually weakens the cause of disease through the thoughts contained in the prayer and so restores us to spiritual health."[70] It is not easy. "The cure of the illness," says Gregory, "is effected only with difficulty through much thought and medical skill, if it be brought about at all."[71] The restoration of the divine nature in human beings means cultivation of a neglected *ēthos* that God has implanted in all individuals. The life of simplicity that Gregory advocates is something in accord with the divine nature. He says, "The seed sown by the Master of the house is corn, from which bread is made. Luxuries, however, are the tares sown in by the enemy with the wheat."[72]

What, if anything, does Gregory's argument against materialism tell us about the composition of his congregation? The bishop of Nyssa's attack on materialism is directed most overtly against those who find themselves continually preoccupied with trade. This suggests, more than anything, that his congregation is composed in large part of members of the merchant class. Such rhetoric would not be suitable for a congregation of peasants, since their material interests could have scarcely gone beyond that of subsistence. By contrast, it would not have been suitable as well for a congregation of elites, for whom material acquisition was not such an overt preoccupation. Gregory's comments appear most appropriate to that "middling" group, merchants and the like, whose livelihood depended most directly on one's own initiative. Such individuals, hovering constantly between luxury and destitution, were the most susceptible—at least in the popular imagination—to the enticements of greed.

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[69] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 81.
[70] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 58.
[71] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 60.
[72] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, pp. 64–65.

Proclaiming a Divine Ēthos

Gregory of Nyssa's sermons argue that prayer cultivates a divine *ēthos* that displays itself most profoundly in beneficent social conduct.[73] Such an assertion was not entirely unknown in Greco-Roman philosophical circles. The Platonic tradition, for example, saw a connection between the human character and the proper operation of the polity. On the subject of *ēthos* the philosopher says, "He who is to become dear to such a being [i.e., the deity] must necessarily do all in his power to become like him; and according to this argument the moderate man among us is dear to god, because similar, while the man who is not moderate is dissimilar and different and unjust—and the other things follow thus, according to the same argument" (*Laws* 716d).[74] Likewise, in philosophical circles, it had become standard doctrine by the time of Gregory to maintain that *ēthos* determined the success or failure of cultic practice.[75] As Plato expressed quite succinctly, "The great effort spent by the impious on the gods is therefore spent in vain—though such effort is very opportune for all the pious" (*Laws* 717a). Intellectuals had long held that there must be some correspondence between the character (*ēthos*) of the worshipper and that of the divine. Without the proper *ēthos*, an orant's "prayer is an invocation of the devil."[76] By contrast, the individual with an *ēthos* analogous to God's can be confident that her prayer will receive a divine hearing. Gregory thus maintains that "before we approach God we should first examine our life, if we have something worthy of the Divine kinship in ourselves, and so we may make bold to use such a word."[77] What is intriguing about Gregory's assertion then is not that he makes such a declaration, rather it is the type(s) of individuals to whom it is addressed.

Prior to Gregory's time, Christian intellectuals in Alexandria had proposed the idea that certain individuals in the church had within

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[73] See J. Patout Burns, "The Economy of Salvation: Two Patristic Traditions," *Theological Studies* 62 (2001), 598–619, esp. 601–608, and Peter Black, "The Broken Wings of Eros: Christian Ethics and the Denial of Desire," *Theological Studies* 64 (2003), 106ff.

[74] Plato, *The Laws of Plato*, trans. by Thomas L. Pangle, (Chicago, 1980).

[75] For a more detailed discussion see Brown, *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes*, pp. 34–52.

[76] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 43.

[77] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, pp. 43–44.

themselves such a divine *ēthos*. Called gnostics, these individuals had not only accepted the basic teachings of the church, but possessed in addition *gnōsis*, an intimate knowledge of God that transcends doctrine and requires the recognition of the presence of the divine character in one's self. As Clement expressed it, "[The] true God regards nothing as holy but the [*ēthos*] of the just man, nothing as polluted but what is unjust and wicked" (*Stromata* 7.4.26). The gnostic was the individual who had come into the knowledge of her true nature (see e.g., *Gospel of Thomas* 38.4–10; 45.30–33; *Dialogue of the Savior* 134.1–22; *Gospel of Truth* 21.22–22.15). As Clement understands it, the possession of *gnōsis* was a "kind of perfection of man as man" (*Stromata* 7.10.55). It is illumination through baptism that initiates the recognition that this individual has the type of *ēthos* deemed appropriate by God. Recognition, however, was only the beginning of the process of becoming like God. It took much more cultivation to become a "mature" believer. Maturity required more than just the right character. The actions of the gnostic, as well as his *ēthos*, must coincide with the divine. They must lead toward the good. As the Alexandrian says, "The gnostic . . . pays service to God by his constant self-discipline and by cherishing that which is divine in himself in the way of unremitting charity" (*Stromata* 7.1.3). This understanding (or a concept similar to it) appears to serve as the backdrop for Gregory of Nyssa's *ēthos* argument in his sermons on the Lord's Prayer.

What is fundamentally absent from Clement's conception of the gnostic is Gregory's belief that all believers possess the divine *ēthos*, and so all believers are capable of developing the spiritual maturity about which Clement speaks. In truth, the absence of this "democratized" understanding of *ēthos* is intentional in Clement's writings. To him, the gnostic is an elite member of the congregation. His piety, like his *ēthos*, is far superior to that of the average believer. Gregory challenges this notion of superiority by proclaiming to his listeners that all Christians can and should cultivate the divine in themselves. Merchants, traders, craftsmen, as well as intellectuals, have the capacity to be what Clement of Alexandria calls a gnostic. It is not clear, however, that Gregory would argue that all Christians can reach the same level of spiritual maturity, perfection. He does say, "Since then [Jesus] has commanded in the prayer to call God Father, He tells you to do nothing less than to become like your Heavenly Father by a life that is worthy of God, as He bids us do more clearly elsewhere when He says: "Be you therefore

perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect."[78] Clearly the goal is perfection, but Gregory appears profoundly practical in his estimation of their ability to attain it. "The cure of the illness," he says, "is effected only with difficulty through much thought and medical skill, if it be brought about at all."[79] What is most present in Gregory's homilies is an emphasis on actions that conform with the divine *ēthos*. The "democratized" gnostic is one who possesses a highly sensitized social conscience. Therefore, the bishop through these sermons argues that the traditional cultic practices of prayer and almsgiving emerge in tandem from the believer's *ēthos*.

Prayer and the Divine Ēthos

Looking directly at Gregory's understanding of the cultivation of the believer's character, he makes three distinct claims. First, prayer cannot be attempted successfully without the orant's possession of the proper *ēthos*. In his discussion of the term *battalogia* from Matthew 6:7, for example, Gregory draws an analogy between the oddity of the term and the disorderly character of those who lack the divine *ēthos*. "Hence [the Lord] invented this strange novelty of a word," declares the bishop, "in order to rebuke those foolish people who rush hither and thither in order to gratify their desires for completely useless things."[80] Foolishness consists in "empty minds" and "vain desires," people who "daydream about riches, marriages and kingdoms and big cities that are to be called by their name."[81] Such an orant demonstrates that he cannot possess the divine *ēthos* because he wastes "on these daydreams the time he ought to spend thinking out some profitable proposition."[82] These individuals concentrate their prayer efforts on their own benefit, asking God to support their endeavors and hatreds, their personal desires and eccentricities. To many in Gregory's congregation, this would have been the obvious purpose of prayer. "Such is the behaviour of a man mad after fame," declares Gregory.[83] Yet, for the average Greek or Roman

[78] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 43.
[79] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 60.
[80] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 27.
[81] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 27.
[82] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 28.
[83] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 29.

[one outside the philosophical circle], much of prayer functioned in this very fashion. Even for someone as elite as Scipio Africanus part of prayer's purpose was to secure one's desires, so that things "may turn out favourably and that [the gods] may prosper them all and cause them to succeed for myself, for the Roman nation, for the allies and for the Latin peoples" (Livy 29.27.2–4).[84] Even Gregory acknowledges that the Hebrew Scriptures appear to display such an egoism in prayer. He reinterprets such passages and argues that they are misunderstood if approached literally. Of such passages he says, "And whatever other expressions signifying indictment and wrath be found in the Saints bear a similar meaning, that is to say, they want not to destroy man but to abolish evil."[85] A philosophically and theologically-informed vision of prayer is one offered by the bishop to his people.

Gregory of Nyssa addresses the more common understanding of prayer, one that sees prayer as petitioning the deity for one's desires. More importantly, he addresses the idea that the granting of such petitions demonstrates that such individuals were the bearers of divine good fortune:

> But, it might be said, some people who desired offices, honours, and riches, and obtained them by having recourse to prayer, were believed to be loved by God on account of their good fortune. Why then would you prevent us from asking God for such things?[86]

His response is that these prayers succeeded because they were already in line with providence. Individuals may ask, for example, that a particular event occur and it does, but "there are other causes for the success of such prayers," says the bishop.[87] Further, they had an educational function. Like children, orants must mature in their requests. In their immaturity they learn that God hears their requests, but for true prayer to occur they must develop their understanding that "God hears their supplications, so that they may rise to the desire for the higher gifts which are more worthy of God."[88] In short, the practice of prayer is educational. Those whose prayers do not mature into requests worthy

[84] Mark Kiley, ed., *Prayer from Alexander to Constantine: A Critical Anthology* (New York, 1997), pp. 152–153.
[85] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 32.
[86] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 32.
[87] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 32.
[88] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, pp. 32–33.

of God are *battalogoi*, persons who "persist in asking for… absurdities."[89] Without the proper *ēthos*, prayer remains a hit-or-miss proposition. It can never be a successful encounter with the divine.

There is a certain oddity in Gregory's language which betrays, I believe, the character of the composition of his congregation. On the one hand, Gregory highlights the real needs of the vulnerable. He tells his congregation that their prayers cannot be heard over the cries of those unjustly treated, possibly by them. Arguably, the most rhetorically powerful statement of this line of argument can be seen when he queries, "Your debtor is in prison, while you are in church?"[90] The bishop of Nyssa appears to recognize that the needs of the vulnerable are real and worthy of God's attention. He does not discount their needs as merely temporal. On the other hand, when it comes to the needs of those gathered in his presence, he redirects their attention elsewhere. He tells them, in effect, that their perceived needs are not real needs. He addresses, for example, the situation in which an individual might feel justified in responding in anger because of another's intentional behavior. The most interesting example of such behavior being "the wickedness of a servant."[91] Gregory responds to such an attitude by saying, "You do not consider, when you are burning with anger against your servant, that it is not nature, but power that has divided [humanity] into servants and masters."[92] When Gregory of Nyssa speaks of the needs of his congregants, he often says things like this: "For instead of the Divine garments we have put on luxuries and reputation, transitory honours and the quickly passing satisfactions of the flesh, at least as long as we look at this place of distress in which we have been condemned to sojourn."[93] In other words, Gregory's sermons oscillate between advocacy for the vulnerable and condemnation of the materialistic. One whose personal needs are met in a more than satisfactory manner, but who are overly consumed with acquisition, and express those concerns to God, are categorized as *battalogoi* by the preacher. They do not sufficiently possess the divine *ēthos* such that they can distinguish between real needs and perceived needs. It

[89] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 34.
[90] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 80.
[91] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 81.
[92] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 81
[93] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 76.

appears that Gregory's congregation is of this type. They are *battalogoi* in need of redemption.

In his second sermon, Gregory addresses the invocation of God as father. Again, he maintains that one must have the appropriate *ēthos* to utter these words sincerely and legitimately. He says, "If we call our Father Him who is incorruptible and just and good, we must prove by our life that the kinship is real."[94] In effect, the disciple's story is summarized in the parable of the prodigal son. The invocation of God as father comes through the recognition of the divine *ēthos* in the individual and her rededication to it. Gregory says, "That one must win God's favour by a virtuous life has been made sufficiently clear through what has been said before. But the words seem to me to indicate a deeper meaning, for they remind us of the fatherland from which we have fallen and of the noble birthright which we have lost."[95] Regaining one's fatherland means abandoning the "infernal father" to which we have become attached.[96] He declares, "But when he has abandoned his wickedness and is living a good life, then his words will call upon the Father who is good."[97] When the appropriate *ēthos* is adopted, one can call upon God as father courageously. In language echoing the parable, "He will look upon you with the eyes of a Father, He will clothe you with the Divine robe and adorn you with a ring…"[98] In his discussion of the invocation of God, Gregory's *battalogos* has come to his senses. He recognizes that what he sought—riches, fame, honor, lasting prestige—is illusory because he sought it in a foreign land, the land of the prodigal. Recognition of one's waywardness, characterized by an insistence on extravagance, is the hallmark of an individual who has strayed from God. The practice of prodigality demonstrates "that human nature is too weak to achieve anything good, and that therefore we can obtain nothing of the things for which we are anxious unless the good be accomplished in us by Divine aid."[99] In his furtherance of the line of argument that maintains that *ēthos* is of prime importance in the practice of prayer, Gregory of Nyssa maintains that an improper *ēthos* excludes one from the *familia Dei*.

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[94] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 40.
[95] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 41.
[96] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 43.
[97] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 43.
[98] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 44.
[99] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 48.

Like his Alexandrian predecessor, Gregory believes that what separates true discipleship from nominal Christianity is the recognition and cultivation of the divine *ēthos* in the believer. As he says,

> If, therefore, people are "faithful" only in name, but contradict this name by their life, disgracing themselves by drunkenness and revelry, being immersed in profligacy like swine in the mud—then the pagans immediately attribute this not to the free choice of these evil-living men, but to the mystery which is supposed to teach these things.[100]

The true disciple is one who embodies concretely the mystery of faith. She does this foremost through the recognition and cultivation of the divine *ēthos* in herself. According to Gregory's discourse, it is a life that is consistent with God's own *ēthos* and action. As we shall see, it is becoming an *euergetēs* in imitation of the cosmic *euergetēs*.

Because the true disciple shares in the *ēthos* of God, the practice of prayer means a further cultivation of that character in the individual. Prayer, as defined by Gregory, is fundamentally about union with God. It is a participation in the divine *apatheia*, one characterized by a profoundly mystical union with the ruler of the universe. Foremost among the indicators of this *apatheia* is the ability to embrace simplicity as a way of life. The true disciple, like God, is without a multitude of needs. Aristotle may have characterized the divine state best when he said, "Surely [the gods] will appear ridiculous making contracts, returning deposits and so on…And surely it would be absurd for them to have currency or anything like that…When we go through them all, anything that concerns actions appears trivial and unworthy of the gods" (*Nichomachean Ethics* 1178b11–18).[101] Gregory's disciple, however, is at least partly human and not thoroughly divine. He recognizes that certain needs, like food and shelter, are essential to the human context. The bishop says, "Ask for bread because life needs it, and you owe it to the body because of your nature."[102] Bread functions for Gregory as a symbol for that which is essential for existence. Anything more, however, borders on a renunciation of the divine *ēthos*. God is totally without needs, human beings by their nature have needs, but they are few. *Apatheia*, the ability to withstand or transcend the transitory influence of desire, already characteristic of God's being must be displayed

[100] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 49.
[101] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, 1985), p. 289.
[102] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 64.

in the life of the true disciple as well: "A man who leads such a life will oppose fortitude to the assaults of the passions, since he partakes of the requirements of life only as far as necessary, he is in no way softened by the luxuries of the body and is an utter stranger to revelry and laziness as well as to boastful conceit."[103] Recognition of the divine *ēthos* and its cultivation through prayer brings about a refocusing of the disciple's ultimate aims—"even though in the flesh, he strives after the immaterial life."[104] Proper discipleship means freedom from the enslavement to passion and the materialism it promotes, an "angelic way of life."[105] Having thus been liberated, the believer, according to Gregory, can then channel his or her actions further into the practice of imitating God.

Gregory of Nyssa's final pronouncement regarding the cultivation of the divine *ēthos* takes on a profoundly social focus. The provocative aspect of his declaration has as its root the language of benefaction (*euergesia*). It does not appear unusual on its face that Gregory would describe God as an *euergetēs*. Early in the sermon series, he says to his congregation "consider how many diverse good things we have received from Divine grace, for the gift of which we should make a return to our Benefactor by prayer and thanksgiving."[106] Specifically, the bishop of Nyssa names birth and the ability to "live and move" as benefactions that deserve some sort of reciprocity.[107] The concept of divine benefaction was relatively commonplace in early Christianity and even in the larger Greco-Roman context, which, at the time, was beginning its Christianization.

Imitating God through Benefaction

As we have seen, civic benefaction was also part of the larger culture. What is provocative about Gregory's invocation of the language of benefaction is that he ties *euergesia* to prayer. Yet, this is entirely consistent

[103] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 50.
[104] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 50.
[105] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 50.
[106] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 25. The term euergetēs appears twice in the sermons; related terms appear eight other times. This analysis is based on the text edited by F. Oehler, *Gregor's Bischof's von Nyssa Abhandlung von der Erschaffung des Menschen und fünf Reden auf das Gebet* (Leipzig, 1859), pp. 202–314.
[107] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 25.

with the emerging Christian discourse of the time. Again, Chrysostom provides a potent example. He says, "It is not for reaching out your hands to God that you will be heard. Stretch forth your hands, not to God, but to the poor."[108] Christian piety, maintains the bishop, demands that the contemplative practice of prayer be understood as a necessary precursor to a Christian euergetism, an inheritance of the Jewish practice of almsgiving and concern for the vulnerable.

Gregory's sermons on the Lord's Prayer reach a crescendo when he says, "If we approach the Benefactor, we should ourselves be benefactors; if we go to Him who is good and just, we should ourselves be the same."[109] This appears to be the logical consequence of his *ēthos* argument because "the words of the prayer outline what sort of a man one should be if one would approach God."[110] In short, Gregory declares that the true disciple "seems to be another god."[111] Taking on the mantle of *euergetēs* is the *telos* of the cultivation of the divine *ēthos*. Euergetism means imitating God in one's daily activities. God's immeasurable beneficence serves as a model for human activity. Gregory says, "If therefore a man imitates in his own life the characteristics of the Divine Nature, he becomes somehow that which he visibly imitates."[112] As was pointed out earlier, individuals like Augustus or some other notable had taken on the mantle of exemplary euergetism in previous centuries. In the fourth century, however, the church through its leadership began to transform the nature of the discourse on good works. As Gregory says quite pointedly, God was now to serve as the exemplar of *euergesia*, and individuals were to model their behavior on the deity rather than the transitory benevolence of even generous aristocrats.

Another difference in Gregory's construction of euergetism is that it involves a concern for flesh and blood people. Prior to the official recognition of Christianity, individuals provided public benefactions that unquestionably made the lives of real people better, but their primary concern was not the relief of these individuals. Christianity transformed this discourse by putting a face on the recipients of such generosity. Even more dramatic, the Christian discourse on euergetism

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[108] Quoted in Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 86. John Chrysostom, *Homily 1 on II Timothy: Patrologia Graeca* 62 (ed. Jacques Paul Migne; Paris, 1857–1866), p. 606.
[109] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 71.
[110] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 71.
[111] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 71.
[112] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, p. 71.

incorporated quite unintentionally a paradigm for social welfare that was alien to Greco-Roman tradition. Through their invocations of scripture in such matters, leaders like Gregory appropriated an ancient near eastern model of polity; one that called upon the powerful to act as agents for the "poor." Brown points this out clearly, "All over the empire, Christian bishops, clergymen and monks fostered a nonclassical image of society by the simple process of speaking as if society were, indeed, divided primarily between the rich and the poor, the weak and the powerful, according to a Biblical, Near Eastern model."[113] More specifically, he says,

> I would suggest that an almost subliminal reception of the Hebrew Bible, through the chanting of the Psalms and through the solemn injunctions of the bishop in connection with the *episcopalis audientia* [bishop's court], came to offer a meaning of the word *pauper* very different from the "pauperized" image of the merely "economic" poor. The pauper was a person with a claim upon the great. As with the poor of Israel, those who used the court of the bishop and attended his church also expected to call upon him, in time of need, for justice and protection.[114]

Applied to the lives of regular believers, they were encouraged to act as God's agents, imitating God in their concern for and actions on behalf of the vulnerable. Gregory's sermons on the Lord's Prayer make this clear. He says, "Therefore it is absolutely necessary that a man who approaches the charity of God should rid himself of all callousness."[115] The believer who cultivates the divine *ēthos* in herself will, consequently, behave in the social sphere as one who hears the cries of the "poor." She will be attune to the claims of the vulnerable upon herself as well as her social equals and superiors. In other words, this "advocacy revolution" sought to sensitize all levels of society to the plight of the vulnerable.[116] The new *euergetēs tou dēmou* was one whose focus was not only on the well-being of a generic city and its citizenry, but on actual individuals now classified under the social designation of the "poor."

Quite skillfully, Gregory of Nyssa weaves a new vision of polity, critique of materialism, and exhortation to adopt a divine character into his sermons on the practice of the Lord's Prayer. As constructed

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[113] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 80.
[114] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 70.
[115] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer, The Beatitudes*, 72.
[116] A term borrowed from Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 81.

by the bishop, the practice of prayer serves an important function in the transformation of society into a Christian vision of the polity. The new, still emerging, Christian polity that Gregory advocates is one in which the great demonstrate their solidarity with the weak. He believes that this new social vision can be achieved when the disciples of Jesus dedicate themselves to an *imitatio Dei*, one that recognizes that actions emerge from character. With the proper *ēthos* in place, the believer can then see the excesses of materialism that Gregory identifies so pointedly. As a practical matter, by adopting a stance of material simplicity, the believer is freed to redistribute his wealth to those in danger of economic and political disenfranchisement. Gregory casts this new vision of the polity to a congregation comprised neither of the poor, nor of the rich, but those in the middle of such economic extremes. By implementing the practice of prayer in their daily lives, these believers can bring about a new, arguably more humane, social order.

Proclaiming a New Age of Social Justice

Prior to the legitimation of Christianity, the classical notion of euergetism involved only the wealthy. This model of civic benefaction did involve great expenditures. Take, for example, this Roman record of a sacrifice for purification,

> Then in front of the temple cows, their horns bound with gold, were sacrificed to Dea Dia—total 2; then at the altars built for the occasion sacrifices were made to the gods as listed below: to Janus Pater, rams—2; to Jupiter wethers [castrated rams]—2; to Mars Pater Ultor, rams—total 2; to deity, male or female, wethers—2; to the spirit of Dea Dia, sheep—total 2; to the virgin deities, sheep—total 2; to the attendant deities, wethers—total 2; to the Lares, wethers—total 2; to the mother of the Lares, sheep—total 2; to Fons <the god of springs>, wethers—total 2; to Flora, sheep—total 2; to Summanus Pater, black wethers—2; to Vesta Mater, sheep—2; to Vesta of the gods and goddesses, sheep—2; likewise to Adolenda and Coinquenda, sheep—2; and, before the shrine of the Caesars, to the spirit of our lord, the emperor Severus Alexander, a bull with gilded horns; likewise, to the *divi*, totalling 20, wethers—20 (*CIL* vi.2107.2–3; *ILS* 5048).[117]

[117] Beard, *Religions of Rome*, 2:151.

Undoubtedly, the wealthy spent great amounts for what they perceived to be the public good. In addition, the *annona* system (grain dole) provided vast quantities of food to countless individuals either for free or at reduced prices. Add to this the actions of local elites like Kleanax, and it becomes clear that individuals gave in order to advance the public good. Thus, it would be unfair to say that the classical conception of euergetism did not affect the lives of ordinary individuals.

Christianity transformed this understanding of benefaction in three distinct ways. First, it made euergetism a matter of cultic obligation. In Gregory's sermons on the Lord's Prayer, one can see how Christian leaders connected the practices of almsgiving and prayer to the Greco-Roman concept of civic benefaction. In the process, they cast a Christian vision of the polity, one that saw society as a whole as the object of pious practice. Second, Christianity made euergetism a concern for those of "middling" status and not just of the wealthy. Through the modest gifts of the faithful, the church was able to amass significant economic resources that were used to alleviate the abject social conditions of many as well as maintain those vulnerable to destitution. Brown is correct when he says, "[L]ocal almsgiving, by believers of every class, may have considerably reduced the impact of the occasional large sums provided by the great—by the rich and the emperors."[118] Christian euergetism understood that little, when pooled, can become much. Finally, Christian leaders reinforced the entire enterprise by putting a face on the anonymous poor. Through the doctrine of the poverty of Christ, leaders like Gregory were able to sensitize their congregants to the plight of others. Most pointedly in his preaching on the fourth and fifth petitions, Gregory cautions his congregation in their social dealings to recognize that their actions toward others must imitate the benevolent activity of God and that their treatment of the poor is tantamount to their treatment of Christ. Although it may be an overstatement to say that Gregory and other Christian leaders constructed a grammar of social justice, it is apparent that Gregory's sermons on the Lord's Prayer represent a form of civic discourse that eventually changed how individuals understood the polity and its obligation to its most vulnerable members.

[118] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, p. 78.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRAYER AS THEOLOGY

David W. Fagerberg

There is an old joke about a man who went into a meditation class puffing on a lit pipe. The instructor said, "Excuse me, sir, but you can't smoke your pipe while you meditate," to which the man replied, "Do you mind, then, if I meditate while I smoke my pipe?"

It might be tempting to apply this framework also to the relationship of prayer and theology, as if they are two independent actions which might sometimes coincide, but not always. On the one hand, we could imagine a person praying while thinking theological thoughts—to that theologian's credit in circles which find theology to be dry and erudite, and to that theologian's discredit in circles which eschew mixing piety with objective thought. On the other hand, we could imagine a person theologizing while engaged in prayer—to that doxologist's credit in circles which emphasize meaning over performance, and to the doxologist's discredit in circles which fear an over-intellectualization of prayer. In this framework, it would not seem difficult to imagine someone theologizing while meditating, or meditating while theologizing, rather like the pipe smoker. Two discrete activities could be combined, with emphasis placed sometimes upon the one and sometimes upon the other.

The desert tradition invites us to deepen our concept of prayer by declining this compromise. The understanding of prayer and theology in the Desert Fathers[1] is different from ours, and we are tripped up by the very bluntness of Evagrius of Pontus: "If you are a theologian you

[1] I shall use both the word "monk" and the title "Desert Fathers" to refer to both men and women, both Abbas and Ammas, because both sexes may achieve virility in their asceticism, and because women ascetics also implant the seed of wisdom. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* records this story: "Two monks came from Pelusium to see Sarah. On the way they said to each other, 'Let us humiliate this amma.' So they said to her, 'Take care that your soul be not puffed up, and that you do not say, "Look, some hermits have come to consult me, a woman!" "Sarah said to them, 'I am a woman in sex, but not in spirit.'" *The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks*, trans. by Benedicta Ward (London, 2003), p. 10.

truly pray. If you truly pray you are a theologian."[2] Prayer and theology are very nearly convertible as terms. If the theological act is the fruit of prayer, then one cannot be said to import theology as an accompaniment to prayer, nor seek ways to adjoin prayer to the theological act. According to the lesson learned in the desert school, the ascetical path to prayer results in a theologian, and a theologian may be defined as someone capacitated to pray. These are not two activities to be coordinated (like meditating and smoking); they have an inherent connection (like music and the stroke of a bow across violin strings).

This point of view is not Evagrius' invention, though he was among its earliest and most systematic recorders. Evagrius lived in the theological orbit of the Cappadocians.

> He was of the Pontic race, of the city of Ibora, son of a chorbishop, and he was ordained lector by Saint Basil, bishop of the church at Caesarea. Then after the death of Saint Basil, the bishop Gregory of Nazianzus, a man most wise, most serene, and brilliant in learning, took note of his fitness and ordained him deacon. Then in the great synod at Constantinople he left him to the blessed bishop Nectarius as one most skillful in confuting all the heresies. He flourished in the great city, confuting every heresy with youthful exuberance.[3]

He left for Jerusalem in 382 after an amorous affair with the wife of a nobleman. Evagrius had a dream or vision in which an angel cast him into prison, and then promised him deliverance if he would depart from the city. He swore he would. "And when Evagrius woke up from his sleep, he thought within himself and said, 'Although the words of the oaths have been uttered in a dream, it is right that I should fulfill that which I have promised'; so he put his things in a ship and departed to Jerusalem"[4] where he first dwelled at the monastic communities of Rufinus and Melania on the Mount of Olives, but from there was pointed toward the deeper Egyptian deserts where he lived the remaining sixteen years of his life until his death in 399. "While in Egypt he had as his spiritual father the priest of Kellia, St. Makarios of Alexandria, and it is probable that he also knew St. Makarios the

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[2] Evagrius, *The Praktikos & Chapters on Prayer*, trans. and intro. by John Bamberger (Kalamazoo, 1981), p. 65.

[3] *Palladius: The Lausiac History* (Maryland, 1965), pp. 110–114.

[4] *The Paradise*, trans. by E. A. Wallis Budge, vol. 1 (London, 1908), pp. 222–24. The wording in the Lausiac History is, "As the oath was finished he came back out of his ecstasy. He got up and decided that 'even if this oath was made in my vision, nevertheless I did swear it.' Putting everything aboard ship, he went onto Jerusalem," p. 112.

Egyptian, the priest and spiritual father of Sketis. In the person of these two saints he came into contact with the first generation of the Desert Fathers and with their spirituality in its purest form."[5] He was thus contemporary with Pachomius (+346) who wrote the first eastern cenobitic rule, Basil (+379) whose *Longer Rules* expressed the community of love, Antony (+356) "the first monk" whose life Athanasius immortalized as a primordial model, Paul (+348) who had fled to the desert the year before Antony was born, and John Cassian (+435), Evagrius' own pupil, who carried the institutes of Egyptian monasticism to the West where it influenced the ascetical tradition as well as future reflection on the vices and virtues. "There can be no doubt that Evagrius stands at the fountainhead of Christian commentary on the ascetical life for both East and West, for Moscow and Constantinople as well as for Monte Cassino and Rome."[6]

Two Sayings make it quite clear that in these matters Evagrius is a student, not an innovator.

> Some time ago Abba Evagrius went to Scete to a certain father and said to him, "Speak some word whereby I may be able to save myself." The old man saith unto him, "If thou wishest to be saved, when thou goest unto any man speak not before he asketh thee a question." Now Evagrius was sorry about this sentence, and shewed regret because he had asked the question, saying, "Verily I have read many books and I cannot accept instruction of this kind"; and having profited greatly he went forth from him.
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> On one occasion there was a congregation in the Cells concerning a certain matter, and Abba Evagrius spoke. And a certain elder said unto him, "We know, Abba, that hadst thou been in thine own country where thou art a bishop and the governor of many, [thou wouldst have been right in speaking]; but in this place thou sittest [as] a stranger." Now Evagrius was sorry, but he was not offended, and he shook his head, and bent his gaze downwards, and he wrote with his finger and said unto them, "Verily, it is even as thou sayest, O my fathers; I have spoken once, but I will not do it a second time."[7]

So Evagrius listened. And he learned. And he recorded what he learned. And what he recorded influenced later spiritual authors, so although we

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[5] Introductory note to Evagrius' writings in *The Philokalia* vol. 1, Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, eds., (Boston, 1979), p. 29.

[6] Aidan Kavanagh, "Eastern Influences on the Rule of Saint Benedict," in *Monasticism and the Arts*, ch. 2, Timothy Verdon, ed., (Syracuse, 1984), p. 57.

[7] Budge, vol. 2, *Sayings of the Holy Fathers*, p. 15. The latter of these two is also found in Benedicta Ward, p. 64.

use Evagrius' name most, this prayer tradition should not be thought of as idiosyncratically his. His ascetical work was adopted and modified by a stream of theologians who nuanced the doctrine of dispassion, including Diadochus, Maximus the Confessor, John Climacus, Hesychius, Nicetas, Symeon the New Theologian, and culminating in Gregory Palamas.[8]

Evagrius proposes three stages on which the struggle to learn prayer occurs, summarized briefly here and detailed more completely below, and the desert's definition of theology may be found by noting their very sequence. These three stages stand under two major divisions: "*praktike*, where the concern is purifying the passionate part of the soul; and knowledge [*theoria*], where the rational part of the soul devotes itself to contemplation and knowledge."[9] Think of it as 1, 2a, and 2b. The first stage, that of *praktike*, is, as we might expect, highly practical in dealing with methods to overcome the passions. Upon this stage[10] one does battle with "the eight evil thoughts" which are the ground of the passions (*pathe*). To put the passions away is to attain a state of freedom—*apatheia*, or dispassion—which "marks a decisive turning point in the spiritual itinerary of the Christian. It is the door to contemplation, or more exactly, its vestibule. For charity, the finest fruit of *apatheia*, is the door to contemplation."[11] The fundamental division, therefore, is between discipline and contemplation (*praktike* and *theoria*), but the two types of contemplative knowledge are further distinguishable by their mutual objects, i.e., according to whether one is contemplating created natures or God. Evagrius calls the second stage *physike* because it is the act of contemplating the cosmos in the light of revelation. This can be called spiritual, for one sees beyond appearances to know the Creator in the signs of his creatures. The third stage contemplates God himself, and thus knows the mystery of the Trinity experientially. "It amounts to the experiential knowledge of God through the highest form of prayer."[12] This third stage, this summit, Evagrius calls *theologia*.

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[8] For an easy overview of these hesychastic authors, see Fr. John Meyendorff, *St Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood, 1974).

[9] Jeremy Driscoll, O. S. B., *The 'Ad Monachos' of Evagrius Ponticus: Its Structure and a Select Commentary* (Rome, 1991), p. 11.

[10] It seems better to say "upon this stage" than "in this stage," because the stages are not really phases one passes through to leave behind. The same observation about human nature is made by Kierkegaard when he spoke of stages. That said, it must be acknowledged that Evagrius is more confident than the later tradition in talking about *apatheia* as being an achievement.

[11] Bamberger, p. lxxxvii.

[12] Bamberger, p. lxxxii, footnote 231.

Participation in the life of the Trinity is the ultimate goal of ascetical prayer. This is not knowledge about God, it is experiential knowledge of the Trinity made possible by the Son's revelation of the Father and made available by the Holy Spirit's indwelling in us as God's temple. "[P]rayer lifts man above his very nature, to set him on a level with the angels. 'By true prayer a monk becomes the equal of an angel' (*Chapters on Prayer*, 36). By his contemplation he also becomes a temple of God. Finally, it elevates him to the knowledge of the very Trinity itself."[13] "The sense of the word *theology* [*theologia*] is reserved by Evagrius to refer to the Trinity."[14]

Evagrius summarizes the sequence of *praktike—physike—theologia* several times in *The Praktikos*, the clearest case being in the first entry of the hundred chapters that make up this book. "Christianity is the dogma of Christ our Savior. It is composed of *praktike*, of the contemplation of the physical world, and of the contemplation of God."[15] A second summary is to be found in the book's introductory letter to Anatolius, where Evagrius records the words spoken to a new monk when he receives the habit.

> The fear of God strengthens faith, my son, and continence in turn strengthens this fear. Patience and hope make this latter virtue solid beyond all shaking, and they also give birth to *apatheia*. Now this *apatheia* has a child called *agape* who keeps the door to deep knowledge of the created universe. Finally, to this knowledge succeed theology and the supreme beatitude.[16]

A third summary is found in chapter 84, where Evagrius describes the originating point of the ascetical stage, and the originating point of the contemplative stages. Since the demons also know these originating points, this is where they attack.

> The goal of the ascetic life is charity; the goal of contemplative knowledge is theology. The beginnings of each are faith and contemplation of nature respectively. Such of the demons as fall upon the affective part of the soul are said to be the opponents of the ascetic life. Those again who disturb the rational part are the enemies of all truth and the adversaries of contemplation.

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[13] Bamberger, p. 48.
[14] Driscoll, p. 17.
[15] *The Praktikos* ch. 1.
[16] Bamberger, p. 14, the "Introductory Letter to Anatolius" which accompanies *The Praktikos*.

It would seem, then, by this organization, that theology is what awaits a person at the top of an arduous ascetical climb called *praktike*. The whole aim of asceticism is to capacitate a person for prayer, and the highest experience of prayer is *theologia*.

The root of the word *asceticism* implies a training designed to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior. Used of an athlete, it referred to the training one underwent in order to accomplish a goal.

> The word "asceticism" derives from the Greek term for physical exercise, such as athletic practice. The idea of training the soul to virtue by disciplining the body is fundamental to monastic theory. Here, Christian monasticism provided a distinct and original anthropology. In many Greco-Roman theories the purpose of "philosophic" asceticism was to purify the soul of the body's influence. . . . In its purest form the Christian concept of *ascesis* seeks not the liberation of the soul from the body but the integration of the person, spiritually and materially. *Ascesis* was thus a manner of disciplining the body and training the mind by prayers, vigils and fasting, until the whole person was attuned to his or her best ability to hear and obey the voice of God.[17]

Asceticism is not an end in itself, as Abba Moses explains in *The Conferences* recorded by John Cassian. Abba Moses notes that every human task is engaged toward an end, or goal: the farmer suffers heat and blisters to bring in a good crop, the merchant risks storms at sea to ship cargo, and soldiers suffer present hardships and wars to obtain honor. Abba Moses asks Cassian what was his goal in becoming an ascetic? Cassian answers simplistically that it was for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. This prompts Abba Moses to distinguish two kinds of ends or goals, which he calls *scopos* (short-term) and *telos* (ultimate). The farmer's ultimate goal is to have plenty and live free from care, but to reach that *telos* he has the more immediate *scopos* of keeping his field clear from all brambles and weeds. The businessman chooses carefully the most economical path to wealth, and the ones seeking honor make up their minds to what duties and conditions they must devote themselves. Similarly, there is a *telos* and *scopos* for the monastic ascetic. "The end of our profession indeed, as we have said, is the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven: but the goal or scopos is purity of heart, without which it is impossible for anyone to reach

[17] John McGuckin, "Monasticism," in The Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity (Oxford, 1999) 321.

that end."[18] Purity of heart is how John Cassian translates his master's word, *apatheia*, in order to make it more acceptable to western readers. *Praktike* is a discipline that strives for dispassion, and the finest fruit of *apatheia* is charity, which is the door to contemplation. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Praktike

To consider each of these three stages in greater detail we must begin with an understanding of what this tradition means by a "passion." In modern English, the word can be used either positively or negatively, that is, for either a positive or negative emotion. The word roughly means feeling something deeply, a sort of ardor or zeal, and so we use the word to speak of both "a passion for art," or killing someone "in a state of passion." The word itself is neutral, and only indicates the heightened state in which an end is pursued with fervor, be that end admirable or condemnable. The Western Fathers of the church generally used the word "passion" in this way, too, which led Jerome and Augustine to complain about the condemnation of passions by some. But the word played in a different language game in the ascetical jargon of the eastern Desert Fathers. For them the word "passion" generally had a negative meaning because it referred to a disoriented and discordant and diseased heart, a condition called *pathe*. "For the Eastern Fathers, the passions could be neither good nor indifferent. The soul is by nature the image of God. As the result of sin, it has been cloaked with various passions. The aim of *praxis* is to strip the soul of these *pathe*."[19] When the desert tradition speaks of the passions, it means those thoughts and states which separate a person from God because they dampen *agape*. In this sense, they name the spiritual rebellion that distorts an otherwise good creation—in somewhat the same manner that the New Testament speaks of overcoming the world, even though "world" could also name God's good and innocent creation. In fact, St. Isaac the Syrian says that when we say "the world" we simply mean the passions in total. "By contemplative examination, the world is also called the aggregate of the collective noun which is applied to the separate passions. When we wish to give a collective name to the

[18] *John Cassian: The Conferences*, trans. by Boniface Ramsey, O. P. (New York, 1997), p. 43.

[19] Tomas Spidlik, *The Spirituality of the Christian East* (Kalamazoo, 1986), p. 268.

passions, we call them *world*. And when we wish to designate them specifically according to their names, we call them *passions*."[20]

From the instruction Evagrius received at the feet of his spiritual directors, he discerned "eight evil thoughts" (*logismoi*) which, if left unchecked, can become passions.

> There are eight general and basic categories of thoughts in which are included every thought. First is that of gluttony, then impurity, avarice, sadness, anger, *acedia*,[21] vainglory, and last of all, pride. It is not in our power to determine whether we are disturbed by these thoughts, but it is up to us to decide if they are to linger within us or not and whether or not they are to stir up our passions.[22]

Following the Greek assessment of the soul, Evagrius sees three faculties in a human being: the concupiscible, the irascible, and the rational. If not distorted by the passions, these three faculties could be moved properly, as Maximus the Confessor notes. "The soul is moved reasonably when its concupiscible element is qualified by self-mastery, its irascible element cleaves to love and turns away from hate, and the rational element lives with God through prayer and spiritual contemplation."[23] The first three passions in Evagrius' list are distortions of our concupiscible faculty (gluttony, lust, avarice), the second three are distortions of our irascible faculty (sadness, anger, acedia), and the last two afflict our right reason (vainglory, pride). We should note in passing that this list influenced the West via John Cassian and Pope Gregory the Great, as Kallistos Ware explains.

> Evagrius' disciple, St. John Cassian, transmitted this list of the eight "thoughts" to the West, but made one change in the sequence: to make more evident the connection between dejection and despondency, he moved anger up to the fourth place, after avarice. Further changes were made by St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome (590–604), known in the East as "Gregory the Dialogist." He set pride in a class on its own, as the source and mother of all other vices, and omitted dejection, regarding this as

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[20] *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*, Homily Two, trans. by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Boston, 1984) p. 14.

[21] This roughly means "slothfulness in religious duty," although it is more complicated than our current use of the word "sloth." For the evolution of this term into what it means today, see Sigfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Chapel Hill, 1960).

[22] This is chapter six of *The Praktikos*, and then he turns to each of the eight evil thoughts individually in chapters seven through fourteen.

[23] Maximus the Confessor, *The Four Hundred Chapters on Love*, in *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, trans. by George Berthold (New York, 1985), p. 77.

> the same as despondency, while adding envy to the list. In this way he produced the catalogue of the "seven deadly sins," familiar to the Western Middle Ages.[24]

Evagrius bespeaks a long-standing psychological intuition of the ascetical tradition when he observes that it is not in our power to determine whether we are disturbed by these thoughts. A distinction is made between the first tickle of a temptation and what is finally a fully developed and ensnaring passion. Keeping constant watch enables one to see the beginning of the temptation and to cut off the head of the serpent before the whole body gets into the tent. The *logismoi* are first whispered by demons in obedience to the will of the Satan (the Tempter), whose envy of and hatred for human beings knows no bounds. These thoughts "are the seeds of the 'passions,' those suggestions or impulses that emerge from the subconscious and soon become obsessive. In the ascetic sense, remember, the 'passions' are blockages, usurpations, deviations that destroy the human being's basic desire. They are forms of idolatry, of that 'self-idolatry' that deflects towards nothingness our capacity for transcendence."[25] Thoughts are used by the demons to trouble an ascetic; sometimes each thought is said to correspond to a demon; the demons set the *logismoi* in motion. But these thoughts are, so to speak, just the seeds of temptation, and a person is not culpable for suffering them. Even Jesus suffered the *logismoi*, as his temptation in the desert reveals (thus he is like us in all things, sympathizing with our condition, yet can be said to be without sin). The thought only becomes a sin if a person couples with it, then wrestles against it but fails, and finally assents to it willingly. Then the passion takes the sinner captive.[26] The demons' goal is to prevent the person from reaching passionlessness, so they attack that part of the soul where the passions reside in such a way as to set them in motion. Evagrius describes this with a language

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[24] Fr. Kallistos Ware, introduction to John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent* (New York, 1982), p. 63.

[25] Olivier Clement, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* (New York, 1996), p. 167.

[26] John of Damascus summarizes it thus: "It does not lie within our power to decide whether or not these eight thoughts are going to arise and disturb us. But to dwell on them or not to dwell on them, to excite the passions or not to excite them, does lie within our power. In this connection, we should distinguish between seven different terms: provocation, coupling, wrestling, passion, assent [which comes very close to performance], actualization and captivity." *On the Virtues and the Vices*, in *Philokalia* vol. 2, Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, eds., (Boston, 1981), pp. 337–8. They are also dealt with by Peter of Damascus in *A Treasury of Divine Knowledge*, in *Philokalia* vol. 3, Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, eds., (Boston, 1986), p. 207.

typically precise. "*Demons* inspire *thoughts*, and these, when they are allowed to linger, unleash the *passions* in us. The remedy against this system of demonic attacks is a constant vigilance over thoughts, never allowing them to linger. *Praktike* is learning this art."[27]

Were our focus on asceticism, rather than upon prayer as the fruit of asceticism, we would tarry to consider each passion in more detail, and how it afflicts the human psyche. Instead, suffice us to summarize that the road to prayer leads through this art, practiced under the tutelage of a spiritual guide, requiring the powers of fasting, temperance, poverty, joyful hope, meekness, ready obedience, humility, and charity. These are, so to speak, antidotes to the poison, and the spiritual guide mixes up the medicament in the exact dosage each sinner requires. It was for the sake of researching these medicaments that Christian monks headed into the desert in the fourth century. They wanted to see what it would take to order a life to God, and to ascertain this knowledge they resolved to conduct an experiment upon their own human hearts.[28] Now, every science student knows that an experiment requires that one must remove external factors that might affect the experiment: this is called a controlled environment. The Desert Fathers also sought a controlled environment for their experiment, but they removed the external factors by *removing themselves* from the world. They left city, family, wealth and property, not because they thought these things were bad (they weren't dualists), and not to do something which didn't concern all the faithful, but to search for the tranquility required to notice the movements of the heart, much like a person would shut down other causes of noise in order to listen more attentively to a muffled sound. Tranquility "gives the soul the opportunity to look at the impressions previously stamped on the mind, and to struggle against each one and eliminate it."[29] *Apatheia* is water without ripples so the mind can reflect—and reflect upon—images of truth. When two men came to ask their friend what progress he had made as a monk he was silent for a little, then poured some water into a cup.

> And he said: "Look at the water." And it was cloudy. And after a little he said again: "Now look, see how clear the water has become." And when they leant over the water, they saw their faces as in a glass. And then he

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[27] Driscoll, p. 14.

[28] This was the metaphor under which I conceived flight into the desert in "Time in the Desert Fathers," *The American Benedictine Review* 50:2, (June 1999), 180–202.

[29] St. Neilos the Ascetic, *Ascetic Discourse*, in *The Philokalia*, vol. 1, p. 232.

said to them: "So it is with the man who lives among men. He does not see his own sins because of the turmoil. But when he is at rest, especially in the desert, then he sees his sins."[30]

Physike

Not until the passions are under control (*apatheia*) is it possible to do cosmology or, as Evagrius calls it in the second stage, *physike*. Neither Evagrius nor the larger tradition ever lost sight of the reason for asceticism. It is certainly not born of dualism or self-disgust. Maximus defines passion as "a movement of the soul contrary to nature…Vice is the mistaken use of ideas from which follows the abuse of things…As with everything, misuse is sin."[31] And so Peter of Damaskos identifies the problem in the spirit, not in the object. "For it is not food, but gluttony, that is bad; not money, but attachment to it; not speech, but idle talk;…not authority that is bad, but the love of authority; not glory, but the love of glory and—what is worse—vainglory…It is not the thing itself, but its misuse that is evil."[32] This is thoroughly Christian, and quite different from a Manichean loathing for materiality. The ascetic life is the spiritual method for cleansing the soul, Evagrius says, in order that the soul can see clearly, for how could we see the world as it really is if our lenses were blurred by the passions? We might see food gluttonously, our neighbor resentfully, the goods of the earth avariciously and not sacramentally. The battleground is the human heart, where the passions reside, and this will not be cured by eliminating external material stimuli.[33] "For Evagrius passions in the concupiscible and irascible parts have to be defeated for virtue to be established in

[30] "Sayings of the Desert Fathers," in *Western Asceticism*, Owen Chadwick, ed., (Philadelphia, 1958), p. 43.

[31] Maximus, p. 48.

[32] St. Peter of Damaskos, *A Treasury of Divine Knowledge* in *The Philokalia*, vol. 3, p. 156.

[33] This point is driven home in a story that also comments on the need for community. "A brother was restless in his community and he was often irritated. So he said, 'I will go and live somewhere by myself. I will not be able to talk or listen to anyone and so I shall be at peace, and my passionate anger will cease.' He went out and lived alone in a cave. But one day he filled his jug with water and put it on the ground. Suddenly it happened to fall over. He filled it again, and again it fell. This happened a third time. In a rage he snatched up the jug and smashed it. Coming to his senses, he knew that the demon of anger had mocked him, and he said, 'Here I am by myself, and he has beaten me. I will return to the community. Wherever you live, you need effort and patience and above all God's help.' So he got up, and went back." Ward, p. 71.

the rational part."[34] The rational part of the soul cannot turn to *gnosis* (knowing) unless the concupiscible and irascible are apathetic. The ascetical tradition finds a connection between purity of heart and clarity of mind. Dionysius also says that the struggle for the virtues concludes with *apatheia* and *agape*, as Alexander Golitzin explains.

> This may be defined as the harmonious and measured working of our present [mode of being] under the guiding sovereignty of our reason…*Apatheia* does not, perhaps, mean the cessation of passionate thoughts here below, but it clearly does insist that the intellect ceases to be ruled by these forces. It is thus the pre-condition for all further spiritual development, the requisite ordering and directing of the soul's movement toward further knowledge.[35]

The passions in the concupiscible and irascible faculties must be defeated for virtue to be established in the rational faculty. This is a truth that Plato partially saw when he noted that the body upsets the soul. But since for the Christian the soul is not in the body like wine is in a bottle, or a sailor is in a ship, or a prisoner is in a dungeon, therefore the cure is different from the one envisioned by Platonic Gnostics. The purpose of asceticism is not to free the soul from the body, but to free both the soul and body from the passions. ("An athlete exercises his body; an ascetic, his flesh.")[36] To that end, and to Plato's surprise, we can even use the body to cure the soul, and that is precisely how *praktike* operates in the first stage. Although the fall took place on a spiritual level, it affected matter, which is why this asceticism must also be done to the body, through the body, by the body, for the body. "By what rule or manner can I bind this body of mine?" asks John Climacus. "He is my helper and my enemy, my assistant and my opponent, a protector and a traitor…If I strike him down I have nothing left by which to acquire virtues."[37]

Symeon the New Theologian reminds us that because we are both matter and spirit, we were made to see both materially and spiritually.

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[34] Driscoll, p. 131.

[35] Fr. Alexander Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita, with Special Reference to its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Thessaloniki, 1994), p. 331.

[36] Paul Evdokimov, *The Struggle with God* (New Jersey, 1966), p. 60. Reprinted as *Ages of the Spiritual Life* (Crestwood, 1998).

[37] John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (New York, 1982), pp. 185–56.

> Know then that you are double
> and that you possess two eyes,
> the sensible and the spiritual.
> Since there are also two suns
> there is also a double light,
> sensible and spiritual,
> and if you see them, you will be the man
> as you were created in the beginning to be.
> If you see the sensible sun
> and not the spiritual sun,
> you are really half dead.[38]

There is nothing wrong with the world, but the sinner wrongs the world when he sees it passionately. Matter is not corrupt, but the one looking at matter has been corrupted and so sees the world corruptly. It would seem, then, that between being an ascetic and a theologian, one must become a physician. Not the medical kind, and not the scientific kind, either. Evagrius' physics transcends our splintered definitions because his is the kind of physics which heals (like the former) by means of knowing (like the latter). A true physician knows the world to be a temple. He knows what matter is for, and therefore knows the cure for what is the matter with the world.[39] "Contemplation in this view, then, is not a mere luxury for a few specially favored souls. It is the indispensable activity of every Christian who would become perfect."[40]

Theoria physike is a contemplation of nature, of beings, of the created. "That God can be known from his works was proclaimed by all the Fathers…For the friends of God the universe therefore becomes an open book, a school for souls."[41] But it is more than nature walks in the woods. This second stage, the first phase of the contemplative life,

> includes penetration into the meaning of Scripture. Also included is the structured order of the universe, the varieties of natural phenomena and the natural symbols that fill our world—all these provide material for the pure of heart to grow in understanding of the ways of God with men, and so reveal something further about the nature of God himself.[42]

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[38] Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love*, trans. by George A. Maloney (Denville, 1976), p. 123.

[39] For these thoughts, David Fagerberg, "On Liturgical Asceticism," *Diakonia*, vol. 31, Number 1, (1998), 31–60.

[40] Bamberger, lxxxvii.

[41] Spidlik, pp. 336–67.

[42] Bamberger, lxxxix.

Physike involves seeing the right order of things with an upright mind, an order which was written by the Word of God. If the second person of the Trinity was called *Logos* for being word, reason, rational, order, intelligible, and if through him all things were made, therefore creation is reasonable, rational, ordered, and can be spoken about intelligently. Medieval theologians used to speak of two books in which God had written his revelation: the book of nature, and the book of Scripture. Created things each possess their *logoi* (plural of Logos), and a heart that knows how to judge things correctly can see God behind the reason of things. Because Adam practiced *physike* he could call the animals by their right names. But for us there is a requisite moral dimension to this contemplation of nature because it is accessible only to the pure of heart who know how to draw knowledge about the attributes of God from creation.

Natural contemplation also concerns itself with the providence of God that makes up the fabric of this creation. Louis Bouyer describes the interlocked connection between visible and invisible creation in this way.

> [T]he tradition of the Fathers has never admitted the existence of a material world apart from a larger creation, from a spiritual universe. To speak more precisely, for them the world, a whole and a unity, is inseparably matter and spirit.… Across this continuous chain of creation, in which the triune fellowship of the divine persons has, as it were, extended and propagated itself, moves the ebb and flow of the creating *Agape* and of the created *eucharistia*. Descending further and further towards the final limits of the abyss of nothingness, the creating love of God reveals its full power in the response it evokes, in the joy of gratitude in which, from the very dawn of their existence creatures freely return to him who has given them all. Thus this immense choir of which we have spoken, basing ourselves on the Fathers, finally seems like an infinitely generous heart, beating with an unceasing diastole and systole, first diffusing the divine glory in paternal love, then continually gathering it up again to its immutable source in filial love.[43]

Dionysius will be the one to influentially envision creation in the light of God's full economy, finding signs of God's providential goodness in the world offered for our contemplation. Dionysius' famous hierarchies are the golden chain that binds the Creator and creation together. Alexander Golitzin's study on the Areopagite explains the novelty of a "downward ecstasy." The Greeks were accustomed to saying that if

[43] Louis Bouyer, *The Meaning of the Monastic Life* (London, 1955), pp. 28–29.

the created mind encountered the divinity in darkness, it was no longer a creature *qua* creature, because to have any contact with the Creator, the creature must go outside of himself (*ekstasis*—the very definition of religious ecstasy). What was unthinkable is that God could go outside of himself!

> If the creature may only encounter God as the latter is in his transcendence through "passing out" of its proper being, then conversely God may enter into relationship, including the act of creation, only through a kind of "self-transcendence." Moved to create…God "leaves" in a sense that state of being, or "super-being," proper to him. He goes "outside" his hidden essence. It is this divine "out-passing" that is the foundation or subject of the *Divine Names* and, in so far as they are the mirrors of God, of the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchies as well. God as he is known in his names and in his creation is God "outside," as it were, of his essence.[44]

To the one who has clear sight, the order and beauty of creation will be read as images of God because they are God outside himself. God is beside himself with love. The energies of God are his version of our ecstasy, although the essence of God will forever be unknowable.[45] God exceeds himself in creation, and from the moment of God's first act of creation, the economy was under way that would lead to the moment when God would appear in the midst of his ecstatic product. Jesus is the reason for the hierarchies; creation and redemption cooperate.

Theologia

If *praktike* makes *theoria* possible, contemplation of the world is still not the ultimate goal. It is a marvel to see a mediated God in the thousand mirrors of a thousand creatures, but it is penultimate to the third and final stage, the one Evagrius calls *theologia.* George Berthold summarizes Maximus' view of theology by describing it as "direct communion with God in pure prayer, and 'to theologize' is to pray in spirit and in truth."[46] Maximus writes,

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[44] Golitzin, pp. 48–49.

[45] Eastern Christianity has regularly critiqued the western idea of the beatific vision because, I've come to suspect, of a confusion in language games. For the East, beatific vision is a theological category and they refuse it because they say the essence of God will never be known by any creature—neither a human being in the grip of mysticism, nor the highest angel, nor the beatified human being in paradise. For the West, beatific vision is an anthropological and epistemological category, and refers to the transition from faith to sight which is the perfection of man as an intelligent being.

[46] George Berthold's description, in *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, p. 92.

> The mind that has succeeded in the active life advances in prudence; the one in the contemplative life, in knowledge. For to the former it pertains to bring the one who struggles to a discernment of virtue and vice, while to the latter, to lead the sharer to the principles of incorporeal and corporeal things. Then at length it is deemed worthy of the grace of theology when on the wings of love it has passed beyond all the preceding realities, and being in God it will consider the essence of himself through the Spirit, insofar as it is possible to the human mind.[47]

Theologia is not just knowing; it is better understood as a kind of participation. Yves Congar writes a history of the use of the word "theology" that is enormously helpful in realizing that for Christians the word originally meant something considerably more than our words about our concept of God. For the Fathers, "theology" is the science of the true God, known through Christ, who reveals the Trinity. That is why Athanasius uses the term *theologia* to refers to the *sacra doctrina de Trinitate*, and Basil uses it to signify the divinity common to the three Persons, and Gregory Nazianzen simply names the persons of the Trinity "theologians," without further distinction.

> The word *theologia* takes on a special meaning with the monks and mystical writers. For them it means a knowledge of God which is either the highest form of the gnosis or of that illumination of the soul by the Holy Spirit which is more than an effect since it is the very substance of its divinization or godlike transformation. For Evagrius Pontikus, followed by Maximus Confessor and others, *theologia* is the third and the most elevated of the degrees of life. In short, it is that perfect knowledge of God which is identified with the summit of prayer.[48]

The one who reaches the summit of prayer is called a theologian not for having a reasoned understanding of the divine, but for knowing God experientially.

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[47] Maximus, p. 50.

[48] Yves Congar, *A History of Theology* (New York, 1968), p. 31. Congar goes on to note that the term has a different history in the West: "Among the Latin Fathers up to and including St. Augustine, the term *theologia* did not attain its own ecclesiastical meaning. Several Fathers apparently do not even know the term;…Augustine, however, borrowing the term from the pagans, examined its etymological sense and stressed the fact that a *true* theology would lead them to Christianity. But this *true* theology for him is still only a philosophy…Indeed, it seems we must wait for Abelard before the term *theologia* receives the meaning it has for us." (32). Thomas only uses the term three times in the summa, usually preferring *sacra doctrina* or *haec doctrina*, which occurs about eighty times.

To grasp this completely, it is important to return to the root understanding of *theoria*, contemplation. "For Clement of Alexandria, *gnosis* is 'that light which is kindled in the soul as the result of obedience to the commandments.'"[49] Add to this the Hebrew intuition for a kind of knowing that assumes an existential relationship ("Abraham knew Sarah"), and one can realize that one "knows" God only by entering into his covenant and attaining intimacy with him. In this tradition, theology is God's knowledge of himself placed in the human heart, which is why *theologia* is fundamentally knowledge of the Trinity. Alexander Schmemann has defined faith as Christ's memory realized in us through our memory of Christ.[50] And a more recent and western thinker, Columba Marmion, has defined faith as "a participation in the knowledge that God has of himself;"[51] faith is "the light that reveals the Divine thoughts to us and makes us penetrate into God's designs;"[52] "What in fact is faith? It is a mysterious participation in the knowledge that God has of Himself. God knows Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."[53] We ought to take care that when we do our theology we do not forget the *Theou Logos*. Tomas Spidlik urges us to find the splendor of words now shopworn after long use. "The ancient Christian East understood the practice of theology only as a personal communion with *Theos*, the Father, through the *Logos*, Christ, in the Holy Spirit—an experience lived in a state of prayer."[54] Theology is as much a practice as it is a cognition.

Faith is participatory knowledge. This participation in the circulation of love (*perichoresis*) that flows between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the apex of prayer which was sought by the ascetic. There is no true knowledge without love, which is why Evagrius says *praktike* attains to *apatheia*, and *apatheia* has a child called *agape* who keeps the door to deep knowledge. Sometimes a mischief-maker likes to suggest that Evagrius is more Greek and philosophical because he places *gnosis* at the summit, while Maximus is more Christian and biblical because he places *agape*

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[49] Spidlik, 328, quoting Clement's *Stromata* 3.5.44.

[50] Alexander Schmemann, *The Eucharist* (Crestwood, 1987), p. 128.

[51] *Christ in His Mysteries* (St. Louis, 1931), p. 180. For a summary of Marmion's thought, see Fagerberg, "*Theosis* in a Roman Key: The Conferences of Columba Marmion," *Antiphon*, vol. 7, No. 1, (2002), 30–39.

[52] *Christ, the Ideal of the Monk* (St. Louis, 1922), pp. 291–92.

[53] *Christ in His Mysteries*, p. 237.

[54] Spidlik, p. 1.

at the summit, but Jeremy Driscoll thinks this overlooks how knowledge and love intertwine. Posing the question as "love or knowledge" is to pose the question in the wrong way. It is not a question of one or the other for Evagrius because the two are dynamically united, explains Driscoll. "Knowledge of God is knowledge of a God who is love. And love is not merely a passageway; it must remain a permanent part of one who has entered into knowledge . . . Love remains a permanent part of knowledge for a necessary reason: because knowledge means knowledge of a God who is love."[55] One realizes again why the path to *gnosis* must lead through a pass surrounded by the high walls of *praktike* where our capacity for love is ordered (*ordo amoris*).

To attain knowledge of God (to learn about God) is not the same as to possess the knowledge *of* God (the knowledge God has). By *physike* we know something about the Creator, but there is an invitation to take one more step up and to share the knowledge of Christ.

> Evagrius distinguishes between an heir of Christ and a coheir of Christ. He says, "The 'heir' of Christ is the one who knows the reasons for all created things subsequent to the first judgment." Then he says, "The 'coheir of Christ' is the one who arrives in the Unity and who enjoys contemplation with Christ." Thus, a coheir of Christ is someone who enjoys the same contemplation, the same knowledge of the Unity, as Christ. But one must first receive the lesser knowledge of created things. This is being an heir . . . Being separated from this knowledge is what characterizes the present human condition, and it is re-acquiring this knowledge which constitutes salvation.[56]

We are speaking here of deification (*theosis*): participation in the life of God, which is *agape*.

Bamberger distinguishes *physike* from *theologia* on several fronts: the former remains in the state of multiplicity, while the latter attains complete simplicity of thought; the former is marked by effort and struggle and sometimes a degree of frustration, while the latter is marked by great peace and calm and tranquility of possession; the former does not imply unusual mystical graces, while the latter is dependent upon an elevated contemplation by the Spirit and requires complete nudity of the intellect. "This kind of penetration into the Divinity is an exalted state and as such is beyond the mere capacity of man. Man can only pray for it

[55] Driscoll, p. 168.
[56] Driscoll, p. 76.

and humbly and gratefully receive it as a gift…In this mysticism at its highest point it is the Blessed Trinity that is the object of vision…Pure prayer brings the soul to a glorious experience of interior light."[57] This is the summit of prayer. It is already participating in eternal life on earth. It is the life which Christ came to give to his kin, the deified sons and daughters of God, and it is the life that awaits them at the end of the stony path of ascetically exorcising from their hearts anything that would hinder this circulation of love. In the final step of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* John Climacus writes, "It is risky to swim in one's clothes. A slave of passion should not dabble in theology."[58]

The path to prayer is memory repair: *anthropos* was created to remember God (*mnesis*), but has forgotten (*amnesia*), so men and women must be re-capacitated if they are to make *anamnesis*. This ascetical path does not simply improve our faith, hope, and love. At the summit the faith the Son has in the Father is made ours, the hope the Son has in the Father is made ours, the love the Son has for the Father is made ours, all by Holy Spirit. Prayer is the Trinity's *perichoresis* kenotically extended to invite our ascension. Thus does prayer appear in various definitions in Evagrius' *Chapters on Prayer*.

> 3. Prayer is a continual intercourse of the spirit with God.
> 35. Prayer is an ascent to the spirit of God.
> 52. The state of prayer can be aptly described as a habitual state of imperturbable calm [*apatheia*]. It snatches to the heights of intelligible reality the spirit which loves wisdom and which is truly spiritualized by the most intense love.
> 60. If you are a theologian you truly pray. If you truly pray you are a theologian.

Paul Evdokimov describes the kingdom of God in this way: "It is in the offering of the heart to God that the Spirit manifests itself and introduces the human being into the eternal circulation of love between the Father and the Son, and this is the 'Kingdom.'"[59] The person of prayer lives in this circulation of love; even more, the person of prayer becomes this love. Ask any Desert Father how to reach prayer and you

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[57] Bamberger, pp. xc–ci.
[58] John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (New York, 1982), p. 262.
[59] Paul Evdokimov, "Saint Seraphim of Sarov," *The Ecumenical Review*, 15 (April 1963), p. 273.

would be directed to a methodical *scopus*, but they would never lose sight of the *telos*. "Abba Lot went to see Abba Joseph and said: 'Abba, as far as I can, I keep a moderate rule, with a little fasting, and prayer, and meditation, and quiet: and as far as I can I try to cleanse my heart of evil thoughts. What else should I do?' Then the old man rose, and spread out his hands to heaven, and his fingers shone like ten candles: and he said: 'If you will, you could become a living flame.'"[60]

[60] Chadwick, p. 142.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMAGELESS PRAYER AND THE THEOLOGICAL VISION OF EVAGRIUS PONTICUS

Columba Stewart, O.S.B.

Evagrius Ponticus (*ca.* 345–399), practitioner and theologian of monastic prayer, brought his deep knowledge of both Hellenistic philosophy and Christian thought (especially the work of Origen) to bear on his tracing of the human journey back to perfect union with God. His several writings on prayer, and particularly his teaching about "imageless prayer," must be situated within that philosophical and theological framework. The emphasis on imageless prayer creates a tension with the Christian and monastic focus on biblical texts. Examining Evagrius' theories of mental operation and biblical exegesis helps in understanding both the imperative of imageless prayer for Evagrius and its problematic aspects.

Introduction

Like other fourth-century monks of Kellia, the hermit community in Lower Egypt where he passed the last fifteen years of his life, Evagrius Ponticus spent most of his waking hours in some form of prayer. Unlike the other monks, he also wrote about it. Evagrius was a genius at psychodynamic analysis in service of ascetic and contemplative development, and he used his skill to probe his own experience of prayer and to teach others. Through Evagrius, modern scholars have their best access to this aspect of early monasticism often neglected in recent study of the ascetic life. The purpose of this essay is to explore how Evagrius deals with a tension fundamental to his own life of prayer, that between a theology of "imageless" prayer and the incarnational dimensions of a religion based on sacred texts. Although Evagrius posits imageless prayer to be the monastic spiritual goal, he writes of experiences of light during imageless prayer and describes such prayer using biblical metaphors. To understand how Evagrius resolved—or at least handled—this tension, we must consider his writings on prayer, his own practice of prayer, his understanding of mental operation,

and his theory of biblical exegesis. First, however, we must note his theological presuppositions.

In Search of a Unified Theory of Everything

Evagrius was schooled in the philosophical and theological traditions of Christian Hellenism, particularly those of Origen. The greatest theologians of the day were his teachers: Basil the Great ordained him lector, and Gregory Nazianzen both ordained him deacon and took him to Constantinople in 379. Evagrius doubtless acquired his taste for Origen from them. His own Christology and Trinitarian theology, however, evidence much more than Basil's or Gregory's the influence of Origen's cosmic epic sketched in the treatise *On First Principles*. Evagrius' protological and eschatological speculations may have been encouraged by his later friendship with those ardent readers of Origen, Melania and Rufinus, whom he met in Jerusalem in the early 380s after his precipitous departure from Constantinople in the fallout of an impossible romance.[1] After Melania packed him off to Egypt, Evagrius continued to correspond with both Melania and Rufinus, and his most famous triology of writings is addressed to a monk who probably lived with them on the Mount of Olives.[2] One of his last letters, traditionally known as the *Letter to Melania* (though perhaps actually written to Rufinus), contains the clearest exposition of his overall theological vision and is a valuable key to his more cryptic *Kephalaia Gnōstika*.[3]

As Evagrius tells the story, the "mind's long journey to the Holy Trinity"[4] is actually a return voyage.[5] The theological framework he

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[1] On Evagrius' relationship with Rufinus and Melania, see Palladius, *Lausiac History* 38.8–9 (ed. Cuthbert Butler, *The Lausiac History of Palladius*, 2 vols. Texts and Studies 6.1–2 [Cambridge, 1898 and 1904], 2:119.10–120.6). In references to the *Lausiac History*, I will use the division of the chapters into subsections as in Robert T. Meyer, *The Lausiac History*, ACW 34 (Westminster, 1964). For analysis, see Gabriel Bunge, *Briefe aus der Wüste*, Sophia 24 (Trier, 1986), 29–37, 183–88, 193–200; Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (Princeton, 1992), 22, 188–93. Also see Luke Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus* (Oxford, 2005).

[2] Anatolios, a Spaniard who had been to Egypt with Melania in the 370s. For this identification, see Bunge, *Briefe aus der Wüste*, 33–36, and Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 189–91.

[3] The attribution to Rufinus is suggested by Bunge (*Briefe aus der Wüste*, 193–200); see Clark's analysis of the significance of either attribution (*Origenist Controversy*, 191–93).

[4] Jeremy Driscoll's title for his translation of the *Sentences for Monks* (Collegeville, 1993).

[5] For overviews of Evagrius' theological framework, see Antoine Guillaumont, *Les 'Képhalaia gnostica' d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origénisme chez les grecs et chez les syriens*,

proposes is based upon the advanced by Origen more than 150 years earlier as "a research theology" meant to engage philosophically educated Christian readers.[6] Certain biblical texts lent themselves to such speculation, and Evagrius used his imagination to correlate biblical themes and philosophical imperatives as had Origen.[7] Gabriel Bunge cautions that the story must be read ontologically rather than chronologically,[8] another way of reminding readers not to apply to Evagrius' own writings the kind of historical or literal reading that he considered limiting and even misleading.

The fundamental element of Evagrius' cosmic vision is the doctrine of the primordial creation of all rational creatures, the *logikoi*.[9] In this creation there was a unity between God and all *logikoi*,[10] and among the *logikoi* themselves there was common purpose, the contemplation of the Trinity, "essential knowledge."[11] Then came disruption of both aspects of primordial unity through distracted "movement" away from contemplation, a possibility inherent in rational creatures endowed

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Patristica Sorbonensia 5 (Paris, 1962), 37–39 and 103–13; Michael O'Laughlin provides a useful synthesis with extensive quotation of the *Kephalaia Gnōstika* in *Origenism in the Desert* (Th.D. thesis, Harvard Divinity School, 1987), 120–52. Gabriel Bunge seeks to correct what he believes are misplaced emphases in other accounts, especially Guillaumont's: see *Briefe aus der Wüste*, 140–64, and "Mysterium Unitatis: Der Gedanke der Einheit von Schöpfer und Geschöpf in der evagrianischen Mystik," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 36 (1989): 449–69, esp. 457–63. Jeremy Driscoll follows Bunge's lead in *The "Ad monachos" of Evagrius Ponticus*, Studia Anselmiana 104 (Rome, 1991), 5–10, 15–18. For an overview keyed to the role of prayer, see Bunge's *Das Geistgebet: Studien zum Traktat De Oratione des Evagrios Pontikos* (Köln, 1987), 62–73.

[6] Henri Crouzel describes Origen's project in *On First Principles* as a discussion "*par manière d'exercice*, c'est à dire par manière de recherche, des points de doctrine sur lesquels la tradition de l'Église ne livre pas à son époque rien de clair" (Introduction to SC 252:48). For a more extended duscussion, see his "Qu'a voulu faire Origène en composant le *Traité des Principes*," *BLE* 76 (1975): 161–86 and 241–60, esp. 241–49.

[7] For example, in the *Kephalaia Gnōstika* Evagrius frequently cites Rom 8.17 and 29, 1 Cor 15.24–28, Eph 3.10. The influence on both Origen and Evagrius of cosmological and eschatological themes from the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline letters (and of similar themes from the Wisdom literature) is enormous and deserves its own study.

[8] "Mysterium Unitatis," 457.

[9] This is sometimes called the "pre-existence of souls," though that imprecise term obscures both their created nature and the fact that for both Origen and Evagrius the "soul" is used to describe a subsequent stage in the evolution of *logikoi* (see *Melania* 29–30 [Frankenberg, 618.20–30; Parmentier, II. 219–36]; *K.G.* 3.28).

[10] *Melania* 29 (Frankenberg, 618.20–27; Parmentier II. 219–31); *K.G.* 1.50, 2.64, 3.24.

[11] *Psalms* 88.21 (PG 12:1549A); cf. the Syriac *īda'tā 'ītyāytā* in *K.G.* 2.47, 3.12, 3.49, 4.77, 4.87, 5.55–56, 5.81, 6.34, 6.73. See also οὐσιώδης σοφία in *Psalms* 138.7 (Pitra, 342), 144.3 (Pitra, 354).

with free will.[12] This choice resulted in a "second creation," an act of "judgement" and "foresight" (προνοία, "providence") in which each intellect was given a body as well as a status (a "world" and an "era") appropriate to its degree of declination from God.[13] Thus angels, humans, and demons are all rational creatures but they differ in bodily form and dominant energizing force.[14]

Thus, where there had been equality of nature and purpose there is now a diversity of rational creatures and of the arrangements made for them. Where there had been only essential knowledge there is now "wisdom full of varieties" (Eph. 3.10).[15] The challenge, then, is to learn from the providential array of creation, and the kinds of knowledge it contains, a way back to essential knowledge. This learning is possible through the Son of God, agent and manager of the "second creation," who, as the Word, contains all knowledge and, as incarnate Savior, provides access to it.[16]

Evagrius followed hints in Origen's *On First Principles* about passage through many "worlds and ages" on the way to knowledge of the Trinity,[17] and about the eventual return of all rational creatures (including demons and Satan) to the original unity.[18] He also asserted that, in the final reunion of all rational creatures with God, "the form of the body" will pass away along with all else belonging to the second creation.[19]

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[12] *K.G.* 1.49, 1.51, 3.22, 6.36.

[13] *K.G.* 2.64, 2.76, 3.26, 3.38, 4.4, 6.20, 6.75, 6.85.

[14] Following the tripartite anthropology he favored, in *K.G.* 1.68 Evagrius characterizes angels as particularly attuned to knowledge and contemplation (= dominated by the νοῦς), humans as typically motivated by (misdirected) desire (= dominated by ἐπιθυμία), and demons as driven by wrath (= dominated by θυμός). Their bodily compositions are predominantly fire (angels), earth (humans), and air (demons). Cf. *K.G.* 2.68 on relative lightness and heaviness of bodies.

[15] For Evagrius' use of this text to refer to natural contemplation, see *K.G.* 1.43, 2.2, 2.21, 3.11, 4.7, 5.84; *Psalms* 122.1 (PG 12:1633C); *Proverbs* 27.9 (G 333); *Ecclesiastes* 3.14 (G 18).

[16] See the *Letter of Faith (Epistula fidei), passim; Melania* 7–8, 18–21, 56–63, 67 (Frankenberg, 612.30–614.3, 616.6–20 + Vitestam, 22.4–27.2; Parmentier, II. 47–60, 134–57, 430–97, 516–23) and Parmentier's commentary, pp. 36–37. The *Kephalaia Gnōstika* are permeated by a complex Christology and soteriology; see, e.g., *K.G.* 3.72, 4.2–4, 4.8–9, 6.14–16, 6.18, 6.33–34, 6.39–40, 6.42, 6.79. On Evagrius' Christology, see François Refoulé, "La christologie d'Évagre et l'Origénisme," *OCP* 27 (1961): 211–66; Guillaumont, 'Képhalaia gnostica,' 117–19. Bunge situates it within a Trinitarian mysticism in "Mysterium Unitatis."

[17] *K.G.* 1.17, 1.24, 2.25, 2.49, 5.11. Cf. Guillaumont, '*Képhalaia gnostica*,' 115–16, for analysis of the biblical imagry used by Evagrius.

[18] *K.G.* 6.15, 6.27.

[19] *K.G.* 1.26; cf. *Melania* 22–29 (Frankenberg, 616.20–618.27; Parmentier, II. 158–231), *K.G.* 1.29, 1.58, 2.17, 2.62, 3.66, 3.68.

The exact status of these same points in Origen's theology has been debated since the fourth century.[20] Evagrius' highly compact literary style, especially in the *Kephalaia Gnōstika*, makes it difficult to know how definitively he himself held these views. Origen's more ample style lent itself to nuance and conditional statement. Evagrius can give the impression of a much more systematic approach, an impression strengthened by his biblical *scholia* with their often formulaic exegesis keyed to his schema of the monastic life.[21]

Evagrius believed that only those who had made some progress in monastic life could properly situate his esoteric teaching within a biblical and doctrinal framework, or avoid focusing on the system to the neglect of the fundamental obligations of monastic life. Thus he cautioned in his manual for monastic teachers, the *Gnostikos*, "to the young, one must say nothing about things that pertain to knowledge nor allow them to handle books of that kind, for they cannot resist the perils that such contemplation entails."[22] Presumably he refers to Origen's *On First Principles* and his own *Kephalaia Gnōstika*. Evagrius' teaching on the ascetic dimension of monastic life (πρακτική) does not depend on the theological vision outlined in the *Kephalaia Gnōstika* or *Letter to Melania*. However, even in relatively accessible texts like the *Praktikos* and the biblical commentaries, Evagrius situates his teaching within the broader vision by describing stages of ascetic discipline and

[20] Henri Crouzel has sought to rehabilitate the picture of Origen's thought created by Koetschau's "restored" text of *On First Principles* in GCS 22; see the introduction to his own edition in SC 252:33. On the succession of stages and the question of *metempsychosis*, see *On First Principles* 1.6.3 (SC 252:200–204; cf. Crouzel's commentary in SC 253:101 n. 29) and 1.8.4 (pp. 228–32; cf. 253:119–25); on the restoration of all things (ἀποκατάστασις), see 1.6.1–3 (pp. 194–204; cf. SC 253:91–101 nn. 6–27), 1.8.3 (pp. 226–28; cf. SC 253:116–17 nn. 11–15) and 3.5.6–8 (SC 268:228–34; cf. SC 269:112–19 nn. 34–49); on the ultimate status of the body, 1.6.4 (pp. 204–6; cf. SC 253:101–2 nn. 30–34), 2.2–3 (pp. 246–74; cf. SC 253:137–58), 3.6 (SC 268:234–54; cf. SC 269:119–50). The papers published in *Origeniana Quarta* (ed. Lothar Lies [Innsbruck/Wien: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1987]) address particularly the controversial aspects of Origen's thought.

[21] See Michael O'Laughlin, "New Questions Concerning the Origenism of Evagrius," *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven, 1992), 528–34, esp. 529–32.

[22] *Gnostikos* 25 (Syriac ed. Frankenberg, 548.28–35). Cf. *Gnostikos* 36 on not revealing the "highest explanation" (ὑψηλότερος λόγος) about judgment to seculars and the young, lest one unduly reduce the motivation of those still spurred to virtue by fear of punishment. Evagrius may be thinking here of the doctrine of ἀποκατάστασις, which suggests that all rational creatures are eventually saved. In *Gnostikos* 23 he allows the teacher to feign ignorance about a matter inappropriate for the inquirer to know (Syriac ed. Frankenberg, 548.24–26).

contemplation.[23] Thus, through fidelity to the *praktikē*, one grows into the emotional integration Evagrius calls *apatheia* ("freedom from [control by] the passions"). Deeper engagement with God's work in creation then becomes possible through "natural contemplation" (θεωρία φυσική), first of the visible and then of the invisible created orders.[24] The ultimate goal, of course, is "theology" (θεολογία), return to essential knowledge of the Trinity. For Evagrius, knowledge is the fruit of contemplation, and the usual contemplative medium is the Bible, which is to be interpreted according to the stages of the spiritual journey.[25] Attentiveness to oneself and to the natural creation are collateral forms of contemplation, and always in dialogue with biblical texts. Through asceticism, human beings hone their capacity for understanding the revelation of God's plan and intentions as found in the Bible, the key to multiform knowledge and necessary preparation for essential knowledge.

By the end of the fourth century, Origen's speculations were creating problems for those attracted to his theology. Questions that Origen could reasonably declare open in the third century had closed considerably a century-and-a-half later. The history of the "Origenist Controversy" is complex and much remains unclear about what was actually at stake.[26] Scholars still argue the precise links between the teachings of Origen and Evagrius, and between those of Evagrius and enthusiastic monastic readers in sixth-century Palestine who taught that human

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[23] Often as a preliminary stage setting, as in *Praktikos* 1–3, *Proverbs* 1–3, *Ecclesiastes* 1–3. The same themes recur elsewhere in those works and are the basis of the teaching program outlined in the *Gnostikos*.

[24] See *Melania* 5–18 (Frankenberg, 612.22–616.10; Parmentier, II. 35–140); the *Kephalaia Gnōstika* is full of references to "first" and "second" natural contemplations, corresponding to the λογικοί as the "first creation" (unembodied or invisible) and as "second creation" (embodied); see, e.g., *K.G.* 2.2, 2.4, 3.24, and 3.26, 4.10–11, 5.32. For a different numbering, but a complete schema, see *K.G.* 1.27. The best overviews of the system are the introductory chapters of the *Prakikos*, *Proverbs*, and *Ecclesiastes*, as noted above.

[25] See, e.g., *Gnostikos* 18–20 (Syriac ed. Frankenberg, 548.2–19) and the section on Evagrian exegsis later in this essay.

[26] On the controversy of the fourth-sixth centuries, see particularly Guillaumont, '*Kephalaia gnōstica*'; Jonathon Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*, NAPS Patristic Monograph Series 13 (Macon, 1988); Clark, *Origenist Controversy*; Brian Daley, "What did 'Origenism' Mean in the Sixth Century?" *Origeniana Sexta: Origène et la Bible*, ed. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 118 (Leuven, 1995), 627–38. Bunge focuses on Evagrius' role in the fourth-century phase in *Briefe aus der Wüste*, 54–70, and more broadly in "Origenismus-Gnostizismus: Zum geistesgeschichtlichen Standort des Evagrios Pontikos," *VC* 40 (1986): 24–54, where he argues that Evagrius' seeming Origenism was actually a strategy for dealing with contemporary Gnosticism. For a useful assessment of the various perspectives on this question, especially Bunge's, see O'Laughlin, "New Questions."

beings will eventually become "equals of Christ" (ἰσοχριστοί) as part of the eschatological restoration of all things.[27] Even before Evagrius' death in 399, his friend and admirer Palladius had been attacked in the campaign against Origenism begun by Epiphanius of Salamis.[28] Evagrius himself lamented the hostility abroad at the time.[29] After Theophilus of Alexandria's sudden embrace of the anti-Origenist campaign around the time of Evagrius' death, the monastic group with which Evagrius was closely associated, the "Tall Brothers" of Nitria and their followers, became a target.[30] As we shall see, it was Ammonius, eldest of the Tall Brothers, who accompanied Evagrius on a journey to Upper Egypt to consult John of Lycopolis about the experience of light during prayer.

Evagrius' teaching lurks in this first round of the monastic Origenist controversy even though he is not named in the extant sources.[31] Given Jerome's professed loathing for Origen's *On First Principles* and especially for Rufinus' translation of it, one can only imagine his reaction had he seen the *Kephalaia Gnōstika*. When he finally did take note of Evagrius it was in a very different context.[32] In time Evagrius' propagation and development of views attributed (however fairly or unfairly) to Origen would severely damage his own reputation in the Greek and Latin Christian worlds (again, however fairly or unfairly). And, indeed, in the sixth-century phase of the controversy, Evagrius' teaching would move explicitly to the fore, and his name would join those of Origen and Didymus in the condemnations of the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553.[33]

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[27] Henri Crouzel, for example, blames Evagrius for turning Origen's supple thought into a condemnable system (see, e.g., *Origen*, tr. A.S. Worrall [New York, 1989], 175–179). Gabriel Bunge has argued analogously against those, such as Antoine Guillaumont, whom he thinks have read Evagrius too much in terms of the anathemas of 553: see, e.g., *Briefe aus der Wüste*, 59 n. 166, 67 n. 188, 144 n. 153; "Origenismus-Gnostizismus"; "Mysterium Unitatis," *passim*.

[28] Epiphanius writing to John of Jerusalem, preserved as Jerome's *Letter* 51.9 (CSEL 54.411–12). See Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 22–23.

[29] *Letters* 51–53, 59 (Frankenberg, 598.13–602.3, 608.14–27). See Bunge, *Briefe aus der Wüste*, 67–70 and 189.

[30] See Theophilus' synodical letter of 400 (= Jerome, *Letter* 92.1 [CSEL 55:147–48]) and the discussion in Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 105–8.

[31] Bunge argues vigorously (and apologetically) in his accounts of the Origenist controversy that Evagrius was unnamed because 1) the anti-Origenists must have seen nothing in his teaching that merited condemnation; 2) he himself chose not to engage in polemics (see note 27). Clark, however, sees traces of Evagrian theology in the positions condemned by Theophilus (*Origenist Controversy*, 84, 110–11, 114, 117).

[32] In 415, Jerome, preoccupied with battling Pelagianism, attacked Evagrius by name for his teaching on ἀπάθεια (Jerome's *Letter* 133.3 [CSEL 56:244–45]).

[33] The surviving documents of the Council do not name him, but contemporary

Evagrius' theological sophistication and closeness to eminent representatives of Nicene orthodoxy make it difficult to understand his attraction to what had already in his day become risky theological speculation. Palladius records that his hero was once confronted by three demons (masquerading as clerics) who interrogated him in turn on charges of being an Arian, a Eunomian, and an Apollinarian.[34] The accusations manifest a range of concerns about Evagrius' teaching, including anxieties about the legacy of Origen. Palladius wanted Evagrius to have his day in court.

We know that Evagrius' talents were not always appreciated by those among whom he lived. Although he is honored in the Alphabetical Collection of the *Apophthegmata patrum*, the last piece (of seven) relates that, after he spoke up in a meeting at Kellia, one of the priests silenced him by remarking, "We know, Abba, that if you were still in your own land you would be a bishop and the leader (κεφαλή) of many; instead, you sit as a foreigner here."[35] He himself noted the risk of erudition, for in the *Gnōstikos* he alerts prospective monastic teachers to the likelihood of malicious criticism.[36] The pain was real: though at night demons themselves torment the spiritual teacher (πνευματικὸς διδάσκαλος), during the day they work through the slanders and threats of other human beings (*Prayer* 139).

Why then did Evagrius place his ascetic and spiritual theology within such a problematic framework? The question cannot be definitively answered. I would like to suggest, however, that Evagrius' teaching on prayer and his protological/cosmological framework are somehow linked. In thinking about the *purpose* of prayer he would inevitably have

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accounts by Cyril of Scythopolis in the *Life of Sabas* (ch. 90, ed. Eduard Schwartz, *Kyrillos von Skythopolis*, TU 49.2 [Leipzig, 1939], 199.1–6) and Evagrius Scholasticus (H.E. 4.38, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius* [London, 1898], 189.26–29) do not include his name among those anathematized, as does the reaffirmation by the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 680–81 of the previous council's decrees. See Guillaumont, '*Képhalaia gnostica*,' 136–40.

[34] See the very brief form of this story in *Historia Lausiaca* 38.11 (Butler, 2:121.9–122.1). Butler also provides the text of a much longer Greek form (*Lausiac History*, 1:131–35) that shows affinities with the Coptic life of Evagrius edited by E. Amélineau (*De historia lausiaca* [Paris, 1887], 121.11–124.17). Bunge has argued for the Palladian origen of the longer versions ("Palladiana. I: Introduction aux fragments coptes de l'Histoire Lausiaque," *Studia Monastica* 32 [1990]: 106–7.

[35] Evagrius 7 (PG 65:176A).

[36] *Gnostikos* 32. Cf. *Antirrhētikos* 5.32 on restraining the urge to write harmful words against those who have caused one distress (Frankenberg, 516.20–21); *Antirrhētikos* 5.34 and 5.56 are about how to handle persecution by other monks (Frankenberg, 516.24–26 and 520.9–11). Of the sixty-four scenarios described in book 5 of the *Antirrhētikos*, only 5.32 and 5.56 are written in the first person.

considered how an individual's practice of prayer relates to the larger process of salvation itself. In reflecting upon the *experience* of prayer, that is to say, its nature and development throughout a life of asceticism and deepening contemplative insight, he would have pondered theological issues about the nature of the human person and the knowability of God that would lead him, given his education and interests, to the cosmic perspective that had so intrigued Origen. Like Origen, Evagrius seems to have been fascinated by the idea of a "unified theory of everything"[37] that would offer a theologically and philosophically compelling vision of human existence. The framework Evagrius found in Origen's writings and then made his own allowed him to understand prayer not as escape from the world or avoidance of the complexity of human life, but as a move toward keener awareness of the vastness and intricacies of God's work in Creation, and thereby toward knowledge of God.[38] In the progress from wordy to wordless prayer, from image-filled to imageless prayer, Evagrius could anticipate the return to integrated, unified knowledge that he believed to be human destiny. This vision was not for himself alone: Evagrius' willingness to teach and to write about it suggests a pastoral generosity toward his fellow seekers, at least the educated among them, that was another legacy of his master, Origen.[39]

Evagrius' Writings on Prayer

The present state of the Evagrian corpus of writings is tangled, and those recovering his vision of the monastic life must negotiate a series of textual and linguistic challenges.[40] The original Greek text of many

[37] The term comes from the effort of modern physics to unify both general relativity and quantum mechanics in a single theory.

[38] Brian Daley cites Manlio Simonetti's characterization of fourth-century Origenism as "supratutto un modo di vivere la religione cristiana, in cui una grande fede si coniugava con altrettanto granda libertà di pensiero e un ardente slancio mistico," all formulated in Platonic terms (Simonetti, "La controversia origeniana: caratteri e significata," *Aug* 26 [1986]: 29 as cited in "What did 'Origenism' mean in the Sixth Century?" 637).

[39] On Evagrius as a teacher, see the introduction by Antoine and Claire Guillaumont to their edition of the *Gnōstikos* (SC 356:33–35). On Origen's pedagogical intentions, see Crouzel, "Qu'a voulu faire Origène?" 242–43.

[40] See the introductions to the editions of Evagrius' works in SC 170 (*Praktikos*), 340 (*Proverbs*), 356 (*Gnōstikos*), 397 (*Ecclesiastes*), 438 (*Thoughts*); Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, "Le commentaire sur les Psaumes d'Évagre le Pontique," *OCP* 26 (1960): 307–48. Bibliographic information on the works of Evagrius can be found at the end of this article.

works has been lost or fragmented, and some of the ancient translations show evidence of doctrinal retouching.[41] Many key works remain unedited, and some of the most important survive only in Syriac and Armenian versions that have been only partially published.[42] The relative chronology of his works and some sense of their various audiences is only slowly emerging. Evagrius' writings often overlap, with both themes and actual texts shared among them. Nonetheless, good editions have been steadily emerging in the last decades through the work of Antoine and Claire Guillaumont and their student Paul Géhin.

Study of Evagrius' teaching on prayer relies on three principal texts: first, his treatise *On the Thoughts* (Περὶ λογισμῶν); second, a closely related collection of brief statements on various aspects of the spiritual life called *Reflections* (Σκέμματα); third, Evagrius' famous *On Prayer* (Περὶ προσευχῆς). I would suggest that we view these three works as a trilogy on the psychodynamics and theology of prayer. They seem to have been written after at least the first two parts of Evagrius' more famous trilogy of *Praktikos, Gnōstikos*, and *Kephalaia Gnōstika*.[43] One can understand *On the Thoughts, Reflections*, and *On Prayer* as advanced works in two ways: they probe their topic in greater depth than do Evagrius' other works; they are probably the fruit of his mature consideration.

Of the three works on psychodynamics and the theology of prayer, *On the Thoughts* can be seen as a further stage of inquiry into themes of monastic psychology and demonic manipulation presented in Evagrius' fundamental ascetical work, the *Praktikos*. As a study of epistemology and neurology, it also explicates many of the central themes of *On Prayer*. Indeed, from a remark of Evagrius at the end of the first part (chs. 1–22) of *On the Thoughts*, he may have been writing *On Prayer* concurrently or at least had it in view.[44]

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[41] See Guillaumont, '*Képhalaia gnostica*,' 200–258, 333–37.

[42] See Antoine Guillaumont, "Le rôle des versions orientales dans la récupération de l'oeuvre d'Évagre le Pontique," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (1985): 64–74.

[43] The thematic pair of "place of God" and "light of the mind" to be discussed below distinguishes *Thoughts/Reflections/Prayer* from the other writings. When Evagrius refers to "light of the mind" in the *Praktikos* and *Gnostikos*, he uses the term τὸ οἰκεῖον φέγγος, "own light," while in the other three works he uses φῶς. The distinction between "imprinting" and "nonimprinting" thoughts is not found in *Praktikos/Gnōstikos/Kephalaia Gnōstika*; in the latter work Evagrius does use some of the language of "impression" (KG 5.41–42), though in quite a different—and positive—way: the "intellectual world" is imprinted in the mind of the pure.

[44] *Thoughts* 22.20–22, noting that the question of why *noēmata* of sensory matter

The *Reflections* are sentences touching on various aspects of Evagrius' teaching.[45] Most of the manuscripts contain about 60+ sentences. Three of the sentences are also found in *On the Thoughts* as parts of longer chapters,[46] suggesting that the *Reflections* were gathered and/or written later than *On the Thoughts*. Most of the material is not found in other extant Evagrian texts. None of it is to be found in *On Prayer*, though there are some thematic parallels.[47]

The treatise *On Prayer*, the best known and widely circulated of these three works, is composed of 153 chapters of one to three sentences each. The chapters are compact, and the structure of the collection as a whole is elusive. Recurring issues weave a textual braid ornamented with thematic clusters. This treatise displays all of the ambivalences of its author's teaching on the nature and experience of prayer. As will be seen later, it contains some of the most radically apophatic dicta in pre-Dionysian Christian spirituality: prayer is the "laying aside" (ἀπόθεσις) of concepts (71), even "bare" ones (54–57). But Evagrius also writes about divine visitation in prayer and arrival at the "place of prayer." The challenge posed by Evagrius' paradoxical comments on prayer will be explored further below. At the very least, the descriptive range of Evagrius' teaching should challenge any tendency toward simplistic categorization of his spirituality as either apophatic or kataphatic.[48]

In at least one way, *On Prayer* stands apart from the way Evagrius writes about prayer in his other works. Almost everywhere else he

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destroy knowledge if they persist will be dealt with (λεχθήσεται) in the *Chapters on Prayer*. The text of *On the Thoughts* circulated in shorter (chs. 1–22) and longer forms, as did the *Praktikos*. The introduction to the recent edition of *Thoughts* is largely devoted to this issue; see especially SC 438:122–26. For the various forms of the *Praktikos*, see SC 170:120.

[45] The Greek text of MS. Paris gr. 913 was edited by Muyldermans in his "Evagriana." In some Syriac MSS these sentences were included following the *Kephalaia Gnōstika*, and were sometimes thought to be a supplement to it; references to the Syriac tradition thus will describe the Σκέμματα as the "Pseudo-Supplement" to the *Kephalaia Gnōstika*. They are also known as the *Capita cognoscitiva*, the name given them by Jose Maria Suarez when he translated them into Latin in the late seventeenth century.

[46] *Reflections* 13 = *Thoughts* 25.52–56; *Reflections* 23 = *Thoughts* 40.1–8; *Reflections* 24 = *Thoughts* 42.1–3; *Reflections* 40 is very similar to *Thoughts* 18.1–3.

[47] E.g., the definition of prayer in *Reflections* 26 is similar to that of *Prayer* 71; for *Reflections* 23, also found in *Thoughts* 40, cf. *Prayer* 72.

[48] One author has even described Evagrius (along with Origen) as an "intellectual, cataphatic theologian" while all of the other great spiritual writers of the Christian East are "apophatic saints." See John T. Chirban, "Developmental Stages in Eastern Orthodox Christianity," in Ken T. Wilber, *Transformations of Consciousness* (Boston, 1986), 385–314 and 322–23; see especially p. 323 n. 6.

describes an experience of seeing light during prayer. The only references to this "light of the mind" (φῶς τοῦ νοῦ) in *On Prayer* are warnings against the way demons manipulate it to suggest the illusion of spiritual progress ([73], 74–75). Perhaps Evagrius found himself more reticent about the light of the mind in this text keyed to the practice of prayer because of a fear that false experiences of illumination would mislead and prevent real progress. Fundamentally, however, *On Prayer* shares with both *On the Thoughts* and *Reflections* the central concern that thoughts and depictions be transcended in "true" or "pure" prayer. The theory of mental operation that underlies this concern is explained in the other two works.

Daily Practices of Prayer

Like other monks of his time and place, Evagrius prayed a liturgical office of twelve psalms during the latter part of each night and again in the early evening. The rest of the night and day, apart from a few hours of sleep (we are told that he slept a third of the night—four hours),[49] was used for his work as a copyist, seeing those who came for spiritual guidance, and his own writing. His work and other exercise was accompanied by the recitation of biblical texts. When copying he would have meditated on the text he was writing; when doing other kinds of manual labor he could recite from memory. The Coptic version of Evagrius' life records that he fought off sleep by spending most of the night walking in his courtyard "meditating and praying," "making his intellect search out contemplations of the Scriptures." The same source tells that he also walked in the middle part of the day—when a monk was most vulnerable to attacks of accidie—to keep his mind focused on contemplation.[50]

This immersion in the Bible through copying, recitation, and "contemplation" would have been punctuated by prayer, standing or in prostration. According to Palladius, Evagrius prayed 100 such

[49] This information about Evagrius' daily schedule is found only in the Coptic Palladiana (Amélineau, 113.5–7).

[50] Coptic: ϵⲩϩⲣⲟ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲕⲁϯ ϵⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛⲛⲓⲝⲓⲛ ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲧϵ ⲛⲓⲅⲣⲁⲫⲏ (night) and ϵⲩϩⲣⲟ ⲙⲡⲉϥⲕⲁϯ ϵⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ ϩⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲝⲓⲛ ⲛⲁⲩ ⲉⲧⲥⲛⲟⲩⲧ (midday); Amélineau, 113.8–13. The reference to midday contemplation is usually translated as "structured" or "systematic" reflection; could it be that ⲉⲧⲥⲛⲟⲩⲧ might have originally been ⲁⲧⲥⲛⲟⲩⲧ, "formless"? Despite the lack of extant manuscript support for this possibility, it is a tempting speculation given Evagrius' teaching on prayer.

text-prayer units each day,[51] a figure also attributed to Macarius the Alexandrian.[52] Gabriel Bunge has suggested on Palladius' evidence that Evagrius would have stopped to pray every ten minutes throughout the day.[53] Both Evagrius' work and his interaction with visitors makes such periodicity improbable, though both copying and consultation could have included periods of prayer.

Evagrius' understanding of prayer followed the lines established by Origen. Various types of prayer were thought to be useful in particular circumstances, and some kinds of prayer were particularly "spiritual," purified of clouding passion or distraction. Evagrius accordingly uses the word "prayer" in a global sense that encompasses all kinds and qualities of prayer as well as with a narrower meaning of the purest, most spiritually intense "true" prayer that is the goal of monastic life. Most of his references to prayer are to such "pure prayer," especially in the texts I am considering here. He does give a nod to the four kinds of prayer listed in 1 Timothy 2.1[54] and we have a brief commentary on the Lord's Prayer.[55] He provides a substantial body of biblical verses for use as antirrhetic prayers, i.e., prayers targeted at specific temptations (the *Antirrhētikos*). He seems to regard the theology and practice of such prayer as basically self-explanatory, for he offers little commentary on it.

The highest kind of prayer, however, needs explaining. *On Prayer* is

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[51] Palladius' phrase ἐποίει δὲ εὐχὰς ἑκατόν (*Historia Lausiaca* 38.10; Butler, 2:120.11) does not mean, as Robert T. Meyer translates it, "he composed one hundred prayers" (*Lausiac History* 113).

[52] Macarius the Alexandrian was described as ἑκατὸν εὐχὰς ποιῶν (*Historia Lausiaca* 20.3; Butler, 2:63.13–14). Evagrius' teacher, Macarius of Egypt, would perform twenty-four prayers traveling through the tunnel from his cell to a cave a half mile away (εἰκοσιτέσσαρας ἐποίει εὐχάς, *Historia Lausiaca* 17.10; Butler, 2:46.15–16). Palladius gives these figures for other monks: fifty per day for Moses (πεντήκοντα προσευχὰς ἐκτελῶν, *Historia Lausiaca* 19.6; Butler, 2:60.22–23); 700 in five days by the virgin mentioned by Paul in *Historia Lausiaca* 20.2 (Butler, 2:63.10–11); 300 during an unspecified period for Paul, to be taken as the number of psalms plus other texts that he had memorized (τετυπωμένας…εἶχεν εὐχὰς τριακοσίας, *Historia Lausiaca* 20.1–2; Butler, 2:63.2, cf. 1.12, ὑπὲρ τὰς τριακοσίας οὐκ ἠδυνήθην ποιῆσαι). That these figures refer to the psalm (text) + prayer combination, cf. Palladius' description of Pachomian liturgical practice as consisting of offices of "twelve prayers" day, evening, and night, plus three at the ninth hour (*Historia Lausiaca* 32.6; Butler, 2:92.3–7). Palladius' evidence is of particular importance for terminology and practice because of his close ties to Evagrius.

[53] *Geistgebet*, 31–32.

[54] These are: δεήσεις, προσευχαί, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαριστίαι; in *Reflections* 26–30 Evagrius comments on προσευχή (twice), δεήσις, εὐχή, ἔντευξις.

[55] Coptic text in P. Lagarde, *Catenae in Evangelia aegyptiacae quae supersunt* (Göttingen, 1886), 13.

laced with definitions of prayer that are echoed particularly in *Reflections*. Most of them are about "pure" or "true" prayer, in which one becomes briefly free of temporal concerns and open to the "knowledge" only God can give.[56] That kind of prayer is the focus of the remainder of this article. Before turning to it, however, we must first consider Evagrius' understanding of how the mind works. Only then can his insistence on prayer beyond image, and the significance of his continued use of biblically based descriptions for prayer, be fully appreciated. For Evagrius, all forms of knowledge contribute to the journey of return to "essential" knowledge. His teaching on how the mind works explains what unifies and also what distinguishes each kind.

Evagrius' Theory of Mental Operation

"Tell me how you think you think, and I can tell you how you pray." Although this was not in fact written by Evagrius, it could have been. Many monastic texts refer to demons, distractions, and other incursions upon human freedom, but few deal explicitly with the way human beings actually process the whole range of stimuli that come at them. Evagrius, however, does just that. Fundamental for him is a distinction between a *logismos*, "thought," usually meaning an external suggestion by demons, and *noēma*, "concept," or "depiction," the means by which the mind processes information. He is not perfectly consistent in the distinction, reflecting perhaps the difficulty of distinguishing between external and internal mental operation.[57] Sometimes *logismos* can describe input from angelic or purely human sources (*Thoughts* 8, 31). The word emphasizes origination, while *noēma* emphasizes operation: *noēmata* are simply the way the mind functions, they are its currency. Evagrius follows Aristotle in seeing the mind as creating an inner world of conceptual depictions relating to the things external to the self.[58]

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[56] See *Prayer* 3, 13–16, 35–36, 53 (cf. 54–55), 83–86 (cf. 101 and 113), 118–21 (in Beatitude form); *Reflections* 26–27; *Psalms* 65.20 (PG 12.1504A).

[57] See, e.g., *Thoughts* 24.24–25, where λογισμός and νόημα are used synonymously in terms of operation though the λογισμός is described as impure. The demonology of the *Life of Antony* displays a similar ambiguity about the interplay of inner state and external suggestion.

[58] Aristotle: νοεῖν οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνευ φαντάσματος: "one cannot think without imagery," *De memoria* 449b, II. 35–36; ἡ δὲ μνήμη καὶ ἡ τῶν νοητῶν οὐκ ἄνευ φαντάσματος, 450a, l. 14.

This is highly visual epistemology: thus my translation of *noēma* as "depiction."[59] Evagrius writes that as sight is "better than all the senses," so prayer surpasses all virtues.[60] All thinking and acting requires interior conceptualization, even of one's own thinking and acting. If I hand someone a glass, my mind "imagines" myself doing it as I physically hand over the glass. The mind, being without a body, must act via such representations. The *noēmata* carry the "form" (μορφή) of objects or ideas, enabling the mind to function (see esp. *Thoughts* 25).[61] Entrusted to our use, *noēmata* are ours to shepherd, wisely or not.[62] Depending on their origin, or their fate while in our care, they can bear positive, neutral, or negative moral valence. Evagrius notes, for example, that it is possible to think about gold covetously or noncovetously.[63]

Most *noēmata* result from sensory stimulation, particularly sight and hearing,[64] though they can also arise from the memory, especially in dreams (*Thoughts* 4), from temperament (*Reflections* 17), or from demonic suggestion.[65] They usually make an "impression" on the mind,[66] especially if they arise from the sense of sight.[67] The metaphor of "impressing"

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[59] In their edition of *Thoughts*, the Guillaumonts and P. Géhin have decided to translate νόημα as "représentation" (see SC 438.24).

[60] *Prayer* 150; cf. *K.G.* 4.90: because the impure are able to reason about things, but only the pure can actually see them, knowledge of Christ is apprehended by "seeing" (γνῶσις…βλεπούσης).

[61] Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas both taught that the mind cannot know itself in essence, but only in act; cf. *Summa theologiae* I q. 87.

[62] *Thoughts* 17; cf. *Proverbs* 28.7 (G 344), the νοῦς as shepherd of impassioned νοήματα that should not be be fed, and 29.3 (G 358B), the νοῦς with passionless thoughts is the Good Shepherd. Gregory of Nyssa describes the νοῦς as shepherd of the movements of the soul (*Life of Moses* 2.18, ed. J. Daniélou, SC 1bis:36), a theme originating with Philo and found in both Clement and Origen; see commentary by A. Malherbe and E. Ferguson in *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, CWS (New York, 1978), 159 n. 25.

[63] *Thoughts* 4.18–21 and 19.6–20.

[64] *Thoughts* 25.8–11, *Reflections* 17, cf. Aristotle on the sensory origin of all knowledge (*De memoria* 450a, II. 11–12), followed by Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. math.* 8.56 as in Arnim, *SVF* 2:29.21–28) and later by Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1 q. 84 a. 6.

[65] *Thoughts* 2.1–5, 4, 16; *Praktikos* 42. Cf. Diocles (of Magnesia) on non-sensory φαντασίαι (as quoted by Diogenes Laertius [7.51], Arnim, *SVF* 2:24.15–25).

[66] The verb is τυπόω: see *Thoughts* 2, 4; *Reflections* 17; "only those names and words that are of sensory things (αἰσθητῶν) impress and create a picture in the mind," *Psalms* 140.2 (Pitra, 348); *Ecclesiastes* 3.10–13 (G 15), II. 7–9; *Prayer* 57 and 67; *Letters* 39.2 (Frankenberg, 592.4–6); *K.G.* 4.67–68.

[67] *Reflections* 17 and 55. Cf. John of Lycopolis in *Historia monachorum* 1.19 (ed. André-Jean Festugière, *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, Subsidia hagiographica 53 [Brussels, 1961], 116.122–24) on the way that visual knowledge is imprinted on the mind like a picture.

or "imprinting" is both tactile and visual, evoking the impressing of a seal into hot wax or moist clay,[68] or inscription by a stylus onto a wax tablet.[69] Even what Evagrius calls "bare" depictions (ψιλὰ νοήματα), those uncharged by passion, impress or imprint the mind, though in a "bare form" less preoccupying than impassioned thoughts.[70] In *Reflections* Evagrius prefers to describe this action as "shaping" (μορφοῦν) the mind,[71] a term used in *On Prayer* for demonic effects on the mind. The demons subvert monastic intentions by introducing impassioned thoughts (λογισμοί) through the senses, the memory or in dreams. These create strongly imprinting *noēmata* that become distractions or fixations.[72] Such preoccupying *noēmata* are often described as "images" (εἴδωλα; also εἰκόνες) or "fantasies" (φαντασίαι). One depicts people who are objects of hatred or lust, replays memories of sin or suffering, creates scenarios of preferment and honor.[73]

Evagrius taught that the mind processes sensory *noēmata* serially: only a single imprinting *noēma* can be present to the mind at one time,[74]

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[68] Aristotle, *De memoria* 450a, II. 33–35, later used by Stoics.

[69] See Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), 16–30.

[70] μορφὴ ψιλή, *Thoughts* 8.19–21, cf. 40.6 and *Prayer* 57.

[71] *Reflections* 17, 55.

[72] *Thoughts* 2–4, 22; *Prayer* 69; *Reflections* 44; *Proverbs* 7.13 (G 93), 17.23 (G 166); *Psalms* 129.8 (PG 12:1648D–49A), 139.6 (PG 12:1664C), 145.8 (PG 12:1676A).

[73] The words used here are:

1) εἴδωλον. *Thoughts* 4.16: "images" received in sleep; 16:28: "images" of loved ones who have allegedly been maltreated (occasion for θυμός; for the same see 25.55); 36.17: "image" of one's sin intruding at time of prayer. *Praktikos* 23: "images" stirred by anger at time of prayer; 55: dreams. *Reflections* 13: as synonym with εἰκών, as below.

2) φαντασία. *Thoughts* 2.14: not all [bad] memories are demonic: mind itself can be stirred up to recall "images" of things that exist; 2.18: thus the mind is incapable of receiving the "image" of the God, who is the Lawgiver; 4.1: "fantasies" during sleep; 4.22: variety of "images," some good, some bad is a measure of demonic activity; 4.25: demons use external things to create an "image"; 27.8: anchorites having wild "fantasies" even after awaking; 27.16: "fantasies" while asleep (for the same see 27.17, 21, 27); 28.8: "fantasy" of priesthood; 29.1: "fantasies" in sleep. *Praktikos* 46.2–3: shameful fantasies (also 71 and 76); 48: unlawful "fantasies"; 54: during sleep; 89.3: irrational "fantasies." Cf. φαντάζεσθαι, *Thoughts* 17.26: shameful "fantasizing" when keeping vigil; 20.9: "fantasizing" about being bishop of Constantinople; 28.11: "fantasizing" healing powers; 33.8 "imagining" an explanation for the demonic effect on readers; 37.24: "fantasizing" the face of one's enemy at prayer. *Praktikos* 23: "imagining" images generated by anger while at prayer; 65: "imagining" things of this world at time of prayer.

3) εἰκών. *Relfections* 13: demonic thought is an image of a human being fixed in the mind with which one interacts.

[74] Cf. Aristotle, *De Sensu* 447b, II. 11–449a, 1. 34, followed by Cleanthes, who allegedly understood τύπωσις in a highly literal sense (as in Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. math.* 7.227, Arnim *SVF* 2:22.33–34). Chrysippus preferred to describe concepts (φαντασίαι) not as τυπώσεις but as ἑτεροιώσεις, "alterations," noting that the understanding

though the succession of *noēmata* can occur so rapidly as to suggest simultaneity.[75] Evagrius' emphasis on singularity may be explainable by his Platonic imperative to move from multiplicity to simplicity in thought and contemplation. It may also relate to his view that, because the mind fixes on one thought at a time, an experienced ascetic can target that thought precisely, using another to knock it out. As he notes in the *Praktikos*, this practice is like "driving out a nail with a nail."[76]

However, not all *noēmata* leave an imprint on the mind. Those that arise from the mind's contemplation of nonsensory realities neither impress the mind nor create in it some sort of figure.[77] They simply bring "knowledge," a more acute kind of perception, about God (= θεολογία) or about "the things that exist."[78] Such insight can be inspired by angels in constructive counterbalance to demonic activity,[79] and can also occur in dreams when we converse with angels and saints (a "simple movement" of memory, *Thoughts* 4.11–14). Because of their contemplative orientation, these *noēmata* are sometimes called "beholdings" (θεωρήματα) to emphasize their nonimprinting, nonshaping quality.[80]

This review of Evagrius' teaching on how the mind works is the necessary background for his teaching on "pure" or "imageless" prayer.

(διανοία) can hold both a three-sided and four-sided figure in view at the same time; he claimed Zeno in support of this view (*SVF* 2:22.34–23.11). Diocles of Magnesia explicitly rejected the analogy of the seal because the soul, unlike wax, can hold several simultaneous τύπωσεις (as in Diogenes Laertius 7.50; Arnim, *SVF* 2:22.24–26). Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I q. 84 a.4.

[75] Cf. *Reflections* 13, 22. The illustration he uses is a rapidly spinning potter's wheel: fix a pebble on either side of it, spin the wheel rapidly, and the two pebbles seem to be one as speed creates the illusion of singleness (*Thoughts* 24).

[76] *Praktikos* 58 (cf. *Thoughts* 2.19–21; 34).

[77] *Thoughts* 41.2–3: Evagrius does sometimes use the "imprinting" language where one would not expect it, such as in *K.G.* 5.41–42 on the "intellectual world" imprinted on the mind and visible at prayer, and *Thoughts* 40, on the "place of God" luminously imprinted on the mind.

[78] This kind of contemplation (θεωρία τῶν γεγονότων) is an aspect of θεωρία. It includes the inner meaning or "raisons d'être" (λόγοι) of both corporeal and incorporeal beings, and the substance (οὐσία) of incorporeal beings (*Thoughts* 41.25–35; cf. 42.2–3); *Ecclesiastes* 3.10–13 (G 15). Cf. Diocles of Magnesia on nonsensory φαντασίαι that are about incorporeals and other things received by reason (λόγῳ, as in Diogenes Laertius 7.51, Arnim, *SVF* 2:24.15–25).

[79] Thus the angelic-inspired thoughts about τὰς φύσεις τῶν πραγμάτων . . . καὶ τοὺς πνευματικοὺς αὐτῶν . . . λόγους, *Thoughts* 8.4–5 and 28.29–31.

[80] *Thoughts* 15.13, 16.11, 25.6, 41.30; *Reflections* 22, cf. 17; cf. *Proverbs* 3.15 (G 30), 5.19 (G 67), 30.9 (G 288), *Ecclesiastes* 1.1 (G 1) and 4.6 (G 27). See also A. Guillaumont's introduction to *Thoughts* (SC 438:22). Cf. *Prayer* 64, which features a progression of λογισμός—νόημα—θεώρημα—γνῶσις.

According to Evagrius, "pure" prayer is the move beyond all sensory knowledge (and corresponding mental impressions) to the God who is without form or body: "prayer is the setting aside of *noēmata*" (*Prayer* 71).[81] In this he follows Origen.[82] When standing before God in prayer, one must be "unimprinted" or "untouched" (ἀτύπωτος), for Jesus avoids the "crowd of depictions" (cf. John 5.13), that are—Evagrius adds another biblical metaphor here—like thorns choking off the word before it can grow and bear fruit.[83] He writes in the *Praktikos* that the mind is strengthened when it does not imagine (μηδὲν . . . φαταζόμενος) the things of this world at the "time of prayer" (*Praktikos* 65). Divine "brightness" (λαμπρότης), the heart of Evagrius' experience of prayer, appears only when "depictions of things" are suppressed (*Thoughts* 2.19–21). Even nonimprinting depictions that convey knowledge about anything other than God subvert true prayer,[84] for they remain in the realm of diversified knowledge rather than of unitary divine knowledge (*Prayer* 58). Only knowledge of the Trinity is "essential knowledge," that is to say, knowledge without an object exterior to the self. To attain to such knowledge in prayer, all other *noēmata* must be left behind. And, as we saw earlier, for the mind to attain such knowledge is to have experienced a return to its primordial condition, to have anticipated its eschatological goal.

How does Evagrius' understanding of prayer beyond thought and depiction fit a religion centered on an incarnate Savior and based on sacred texts? Despite the imperative to put aside all thoughts in prayer, Evagrius does not in fact see *all* words and imagery as only propedeutic to true prayer. There are indeed *noēmata* and images from or about God[85] suitable for the kind of prayer he calls the "conversation of the mind with God" (ὁμιλία νοῦ πρὸς θεόν).[86] Evagrius' use of that definition

[81] On the need to discard impassioned νοήματα: *Prayer* 4, 10, 47, 54–55, 62, 64, 72; *Letter* 58.3 (Frankenberg, 606.32–33). On the need to discard simple νοήματα: *Prayer* 56–57; cf. "human" thoughts in *Thoughts* 8.17–20. On the need to discard νοήματα in general: *Prayer* 63, 70–71 (cf. 57 on contemplation of the λόγοι of things); *Thoughts* 2.20–21, 22.20–22, 40.1–3; *Reflections* 26; K.G. 5.64 (the soul in ἀπάθεια remains unmarked by earthly things); *Letters* 39.2 and 5 (Frankenberg, 592.4–8 and 19–25), cf. *Letter* 61.3 (Frankenberg, 610.21–24); *Ecclesiastes* 1.11 (G 3), II. 7–9 (the νοῦς contemplating God and receiving the Holy Trinity).

[82] Origen, *On Prayer* 20.2 (GCS 3:344.21–26).

[83] *Thoughts* 6.12–14; cf. Matt 13.22; see also *Psalms* 140.2 (Pitra, 348).

[84] *Prayer* 57; cf. 70–71; *Reflections* 22–23.

[85] *Prayer* 94, on asking God if the νόημα enlightening one is from him; *Thoughts* 41 on nonimprinting νοήματα about God; *Psalms* 140.2 (Pitra, 348).

[86] *Prayer* 3 [cf. 4, 34, 55], *Reflections* 28. Cf. *Psalms* 140.2 (Pitra, 348): ἐστὶν ἕν εἶδος

of prayer inherited from Clement of Alexandria[87] is more than just a bow to tradition. Prayer is an encounter with a personal God, and Evagrius keeps biblical words and imagery in play even in his descriptions of the highest stages of prayer. To understand how this can be possible for him, one must turn to Evagrius' descriptions of the actual experience of prayer.

Experiences in Prayer

As noted earlier, in his treatise *On Prayer*, Evagrius provides an array of cautions against mistaking sensory phenomena for experiences of God. Evagrius' God is above all perception (αἴσθησις) and thought (ἔννοια) (*Prayer* 4). Encounter with God in prayer does not entail recognition of a form or shape, since God has neither (*Prayer* 67–75, 114–118). These are theological claims, or, more properly perhaps, metaphysical ones. We have already seen the epistemological corollary that true prayer means shucking, however briefly, the concepts and mental depictions that link us to the world of normal experience. We are reminded to "approach the One who is immaterial immaterially," and that to "locate" or limit God with a mental image is fruitless and perhaps even demonic.[88] The goal is that we ourselves go to God in prayer without any notion of form (ἀμορφία), immaterial and dispossessed, in the surrender of all hope of sensory perception (ἀναισθησία).[89] These are all cautions against our presuming to control the encounter with our expectations of what it and God will—or should—be like.

Even so, Evagrius does not by any means claim that the encounter with God in "true" prayer is devoid of religious experience. With respect to limited things, including our own ideas about God, we must acquire *anaisthēsia*. But note the following descriptions, all from *On Prayer*. God draws near to accompany the one who prays (64–65, 66) and provides the gift of prayer (70), enlightening the mind with God's own *noēma* (94). Angels protect the one who prays while teaching true prayer (76, 81, 96; cf. 80). The Holy Spirit comes upon the mind in an act of divine visitation (ἐπιφοιτάω) to banish the crowd of thoughts and depictions, and to stir an *erōs* for spiritual prayer (63). The same *erōs* takes the one

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προσευχῆς ὁμιλία νοῦ πρὸς θεὸν ἀτύπωτον τὸν νοῦν διασώζουσα…τὸ δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ νόημα διασώζει τὸν νοῦν ἀναγκαίως ἀτύπωτον.

[87] *Stromateis* 7.39.6 (GCS 17:30.15–16).

[88] *Prayer* 67–68, 74, 116.

[89] *Prayer* 117–18, 120.

purified of disordered passion (ἀπαθής) to the "heights" of prayer (53), for pure prayer is fueled by desire (62): "Blessed is the mind that prays without distraction and increases in desire" (119).[90]

Although the mind is blessed when it has perfect *anaisthēsia* at the time of prayer, Evagrius writes about spiritual "sensation" in prayer. What Evagrius means is the trading of one kind of sensation or experience for another, the sensory for the intellectual. Adopting *anaisthēsia* toward sensory things allows for the *sunaisthēsis* of "spiritual prayer" (*Prayer* 28). Prayer is in fact meant to be a matter of perception or feeling (αἴσθησις) rather than rote habit (*Prayer* 42), and such "feeling" is rooted in compunction (*Prayer* 43). Like Origen before him, Evagrius maintains the notion of "spiritual senses" of the soul, though generally he avoids even metaphorical use of sensory language when referring to spiritual realties.[91] His theory of the sensory basis for ordinary human knowledge, noted above, probably explains his preference for nonsensory language when describing spiritual knowledge. Nonetheless, in *On Prayer* he surprisingly resorts to language of sensation even as he insists most fiercely that true prayer lies beyond all depiction, shape, form, and image.

Here we can explore two examples of Evagrius' use of imagistic language to describe prayer. The first, an experience of light during prayer, is found throughout his writings, though it is muted in *On Prayer*.[92] The second, seeing or attaining the "place of God," is strongly evident in all three of the works about prayer emphasized in this essay.

In the *Praktikos* and *Gnōstikos*, Evagrius notes that when the mind has achieved an integrated emotional condition beyond the control of the passions (ἀπάθεια), it "begins to see its own light (τὸ οἰκεῖον φέγγος[93])."[94]

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[90] Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses* 2.163, 2.233, 2.235, 2.239 (SC 1bis:81, 107, 109).

[91] See *K.G.* 1.33–38 and *Prayer* 27. For a more typical sidestepping of such language, see *Proverbs* 1.3 and 1.7 (G 4–5), with Géhin's commentary. In *Job* 12.10b/11b (= *Catena* 9.33, ed. Hagedorn, PTS 48:105), Evagrius marks the distinction sharply: νοῦς μὲν γὰρ τὰ νοητὰ, αἴσθησις δὲ τὰ αἰσθητὰ διακρινέι.

[92] On the theme of light in the teaching of Evagrius (and others), see Hans-Veit Beyer, "Die Lichtlehre der Mönche des vierzehnten und des vierten Jahrhunderts," JbOB 31 (1981): 473–512; Antoine Guillaumont, "La vision de l'intellect par lui-même dans la mystique évagrienne," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 50 (1984): 266–62, reprinted in *Études sur la spiritualité de l'Orient chrétien* (Bellefontaine, 1996), 144–50; Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 70–71.

[93] The term φέγγος is used only here and in *Eulogios* 30 (PG 79:1133AB). Other texts use the more common φῶς. It may be that Evagrius' choice of φέγγος was inspired at least in part by its occurrences in the theophanies to Ezekiel (Ezek 1.3, 13, 27–28; 10.4).

[94] *Praktikos* 64, *Gnostikos* 45, *Eulogios* as in the previous note. Cf. *Prayer* 74–75 on demonic manipulation of the light around the mind and the remark in *K.G.* 6.87 that the light appearing to the mind seems to be from the "sensory head"; *Psalms* 148.3

In other texts he emphasizes the divine origin of such light, particularly as the light of the Holy Trinity or the Savior.[95] Elsewhere his remarks are ambiguous.[96] In a more general way, Evagrius often refers to divine knowledge as light.[97] As the mind was made to know God, so it is meant to become like light, a rising star in its brightness.[98] He quotes another monk as saying that the soul is the mother of the mind, bringing the mind into light through asceticism (πρακτική).[99]

Evagrius was not alone among early monks in reporting an experience of light in prayer. Evagrius himself notes a journey he and Ammonius, one of the Origenist Tall Brothers from Nitria,[100] made to ask John of Lycopolis, "the Seer of Thebes," whether the mind is itself the source of the light seen in prayer or beholds light coming from elsewhere (presumably from God). John rules the question beyond the competence of human knowledge while claiming that the mind cannot be illuminated in prayer apart from the grace of God.[101] We know from the *History of the Monks of Egypt* that Abba Anouph spoke to visitors about this subject.[102] Such experiences were by no means exceptional either then or later,[103] and were evidently the cause of some consternation among Egyptian monks. The frequency with which Evagrius mentions "light"

(PG 12:1677D), on light as the biblical symbol for the rational nature; cf. *Letters* 28.1 (Frankenberg, 584.24).

[95] Trinity: *Thoughts* 42.6–7; *Reflections* 4, 27; *K.G.* 5.3. Savior: *Thoughts* 15.14–15. Divine but unspecified: *Reflections* 2, 23; *Letters* 17.3 (Frankenberg 578.3). Light as the reflection from the face of God: *Psalms* 4.7 (Pitra, 453–54).

[96] *Thoughts* 30.16–17, 37.35, 40.8–9; *Reflections* 25; *Monks* 77. Part of the ambiguity is that Evagrius writes both about the mind in its original created nature, in which it is filled with the light of the knowledge of God, and in its present state for which radiance is no longer natural because that original access to knowledge has been lost.

[97] *K.G.* 1.74, 1.81; *Letters* 27.4 (Frankenberg, 584.4), 28.1 (p. 584.24), 30.1 (p. 586.17–18). The theme is common in Evagrius' scholia: *Psalms* 12.4 (PG 12:1204B), 33.6 (PG 12:1308B, both citing Hos 10.12, "enkindle for yourselves the light of knowledge"), 36.6 (Pitra, 10), 37.11 (Pitra, 23): "contemplation is the light of the eyes"; *Proverbs* 6.20 (G 79): knowledge of God is light; cf. *Ecclesiastes* 5.17 (G 42). Cf. being enlightened by the Lord, *Virgin* 1 and 53.

[98] *Thoughts* 43.7 (ἀστεροειδής), *Eight Spirits* 1, *Monks* 107. On being able to see the star of knowledge or prayer, see *Letters* 27.3 (Frankenberg, 582.36); cf. the Syriac treatise *On the Proverbs* 36, attributed to Evagrius but of doubtful authenticity (ed. J. Muyldermans, *Evagriana Syriaca: Textes inédits du British Museum et de la Vaticane*, Bibliothèque du Museon 31 [Louvain, 1952], 138).

[99] *Proverbs* 23.22 (G 258).

[100] On Ammonius, see Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 11 (Butler, 2.32–34). According to Palladius, Evagrius remarked of Ammonius, "Never have I seen anyone more passionless (ἀπαθέστερον) than him" (2:34.11–12).

[101] *Antirrhētikos* 6.16 (Frankenberg, 524.7–14).

[102] *Historia monachorum* 11.6 (Festugière, 91.27–32).

[103] Cf. hesychasm and the debates over visions of the "uncreated light." A useful summary is in Beyer, "Lichtlehre."

seen in prayer suggests that this kind of spiritual experience was precious to him.[104] Obviously intrigued by the vision of light, he was also aware of its dangers. Thus when writing *On Prayer* he said very little about the phenomenon except to note the real possibility that demons will manipulate the brain and stimulate the nerves to create a false show of light easily mistaken for the glory of God or the "location" of divine knowledge (*Prayer* 73–74). Angelic intervention is necessary to restore proper working of the light of the mind (*Prayer* 75).[105]

Antoine Guillaumont links Evagrius' descriptions of the light seen in prayer to the philosophical culture of his day, and notes parallels in the writings of Plotinus. There are certainly such parallels, though there are also significant differences.[106] We know, too, that experiences of light in meditation are frequently noted in other religious traditions. When comparing Evagrius to Plotinus, or to any other mystic, apparent similarity of terminology can mask vast differences in usage, just as apparently similar experiences can lead one to forget great differences of religious culture.[107] Evagrius' own education obviously included a thorough grounding in philosophy in a deeply, even completely, Christian environment: his father was a bishop, his teachers were Basil and Gregory Nazianzen.

What is most striking about Evagrius is not that he used the cultural and linguistic tools of his days to articulate his own deepest experience, but that he found in the sacred texts of Christianity metaphors that could suggest that experience without trapping it within the limits he considered fatal to "true prayer." When Evagrius set himself the task of writing thoroughly and explicitly about prayer, especially that rarest

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[104] Antoine Guillaumont suggests that Evagrius is certainly referring to an experience that was real for him ("Vision de l'intellect," 260).

[105] This series of chapters (*Prayer* 67–76) is the key cluster on true and false experiences in prayer.

[106] E.g., in some of the texts Guillaumont cites, Plotinus describes the light seen by the νοῦς when it transcends discursive thought as proper to itself and not as something other (*Enneads* [ed. P. Henry] 5.3.17, II. 29–37; 5.5.7, II. 23–32). In book 6, he speaks of the light as the constitutive nature of the νοῦς, given it from the light that engenders all intelligence (6.7.36, II. 21–27; 6.9.9, II. 56–61).

[107] This is one strand of the controversy between Steven Katz et al. and those who argue for a "pure consciousness experience" beyond all cultural conditioning. See Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York, 1978), 22–74; "The 'Conservative' Character of Mystical Experience," in *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York, 1983), 3–60. For critics of Katz, see the essays in Robert K. C. Forman, *The Problem of Pure Consciousness* (New York, 1990), and Bruce Janz, "Mysticism and Understanding: Steven Katz and His Critics," *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses* 24 (1995): 77–94.

kind he calls "pure prayer," he developed two biblical themes, the "place of God" and the "sapphire-blue light" seen in prayer, as key elements of his exposition. These metaphors, taken from theophanies recounted in the book of Exodus and the prophecy of Ezekiel, witness to Evagrius' conviction that in the Bible he could find his spiritual universe, and through commentary on the Bible open that universe to his readers. These themes occur in the three key texts on prayer: *On the Thoughts, On Prayer*, and *Reflections*.[108] They are not found in the triology, *Praktikos, Gnōstikos*, and *Kephalaia Gnōstika*,[109] further strengthening the suggestion that these two sets of writings were composed at different times.

Evagrius' use of the metaphor "the place of God" seems to be the fruit of his own experience of prayer and meditation of Scripture. The phrase is taken from the Septuagint version of Exodus (Exodus 24.10–11). Moses and the seventy elders of Israel went up the mountain at Sinai and "saw the place where there stood the God of Israel." This circumlocution (or localocution) replaces the Hebrew's blunter "they saw the God of Israel." The Greek continues: "and what was under his feet was like a work of sapphire brick/tile, and in its transparency (καθαριότης) it had the appearance of the firmament of heaven" (Exodus 24.10).[110] The clear sapphire pavement reappears in Ezekiel's theophanies, for upon it sits the throne of God (Ezek 1.26 and 10.1). Evagrius seems, however, to be inspired most directly by the Sinai vision. Sometimes he uses the themes of the place of God and the sapphire-blue light together, sometimes separately. Their common biblical source links them. Thus when Evagrius refers to the "place of God" or, more typically, the "place of prayer" in the treatise *On Prayer*, he is alluding to the vision of light while maintaining the reticence of that particular text about the actual experience.

Evagrius universalizes the place of God by shifting it from geographical Sinai to the human mind (νοῦς).[111] The relocation of biblical topography to an inner landscape, the reinscription of the biblical text on

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[108] Place of God: *Thoughts* 39–40 (cf. 29: "places of the knowledge of God"; *Prayer* 58 (cf. "place of prayer": 57, 72, 102, 152); *Reflections* 20, 23, 25. Sapphire-blue light: *Thoughts* 39; *Reflections* 2, 4. For parallels in other texts, see the following notes.

[109] Though cf. *K.G.* 5.39 in the first Syriac version (S_1), "The place of God is called peace," alluding to both Exod 24.11 and Ps 75.3. The normally more faithful second Syriac version (S_2) has a completely different text, referring to the "shining heaven" imprinted in the purified intellect.

[110] Guillaumont suggests that Evagrius' biblical text read χρώματος, "color," instead of στερεώματος, "firmament"; the Syriac Peshitta read *krōmā* ("Vision de l'intellect," 258).

[111] See especially *Thoughts* 39–40 and *Reflections* 25.

the heart, is a move typical of Alexandrian exegesis, though, as far as I can tell, not with the Sinai text. Another standard technique inherited by Evagrius is the concatenation of texts that have a thematic affinity with Sinai's place of God. This is especially the case with Psalm 75.3 (LXX), "His place is in peace, and his dwelling place is in Zion,"[112] and other Psalms that refer to God's "place" in Jerusalem.[113]

The internalization of the place of God presents one of the central paradoxes of Evagrius' theology. The place of God is to be found within the human person, more specifically within the human mind, but "seeing" it requires that one transcend all ordinary mental operation. Although potentially accessible to all, the place of God is hard to reach. Its sudden and ephemeral discovery is the culmination of monastic prayer. Indeed, the "place of God" is called the "place of prayer" in the treatise *On Prayer*.[114]

Evagrius' attraction to the biblical account of theophany at Sinai is evident in the way that imagery from the book of Exodus occurs at key points in the writings about prayer. Evagrius describes human existence as spent camped at the foot of Mount Sinai, guarding the flock of our thoughts, hopeful that we will be called higher (*Thoughts* 17). At the beginning of *On Prayer*, he presents the example of Moses, who spoke to God without intermediary but had to remove his sandals before approaching the burning bush (*Prayer* 4). To see the place of God, to speak to God in the place of prayer, means climbing above all impassioned thoughts[115] and all depictions, including nonsensory ones.[116] Alluding to Sinai at the beginning of *On the Thoughts*, Evagrius notes that a mind enmeshed in impassioned thoughts and depictions of various things becomes unable to receive the brightness (λαμπρότης) of God the Lawgiver (*Thoughts* 2). Both light and Word, the gifts of knowledge from scripture, are to be found in the place of God.

The place of God is, by definition, "unimaged" (ἀνείδεος, *Reflections* 20, cf. 22), meaning that the mind itself, when it becomes the place

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[112] See *Reflections* 25, *Psalms* 75.2 (PG 12:1536C).

[113] God's τόπος as "peace of soul": *Psalms* 25.8 (Pitra, 483); "pure soul": *Psalms* 67.7 (Pitra, 82; PG 12:1505D), cf. *Psalms* 92.4–5 on the "house of the Lord" (Pitra, 175); the "pure mind": *Psalms* 131.5 (PG 12:1649C); "knowledge of God": *Psalms* 78.7 (Pitra, 131). Cf. the plural τόποι τῆς γνώσεως in *Thoughts* 29.10 (= *K.G.* 2.6), *Proverbs* 9.3b (G 106), and *K.G.* 2.54; this phrase is used to indicate the "realm of knowledge" that awaits beyond the life of πρακτική.

[114] *Prayer* 57, 72, 102, 152; cf. for τόπος θεοῦ in immediate juxtaposition to τόπος προσευχῆς in ch. 57.

[115] *Thoughts* 40; *Reflections* 23; *Prayer* 2–3 (to converse with God), 72.

[116] *Thoughts* 40; *Reflections* 20, 23, 25; *Prayer* 57–58, 152.

of God, is free of self-created imagery.[117] In an exceptional use of "imprinting" language, Evagrius writes in *On the Thoughts* that, at the moment of prayer, light appears to the mind and "imprints" upon it the "place of God."[118] As this divine laser recreates the mind's proper condition, it becomes able to behold itself, "like sapphire or the color of heaven, which Scripture call the place of God, seen by the elders upon Mount Sinai" (*Thoughts* 39). What is seen has brightness and color but no form.[119] The biblical image is self-effacing: Evagrius follows the careful translators of the Septuagint in choosing euphemism, seeing the *place* of God, rather than seeing *God*. It is a place of visitation rather than a location of essence; as Gregory of Nyssa says of the place "beside me" where God asked Moses to stand (Exod 33.21), "by using the analogy of a measurable surface he leads the hearer to the unlimited and infinite."[120] The metaphor of the place of God is imagery that is stretched thin as gossamer but still holds, like the net filled with 153 fish that Jesus' disciples hauled onto the lakeshore when their risen Lord appeared to them. Added to the marvel of the unexpected catch was the wonder of the net, filled but unburst (John 21.11). Evagrius alludes to that story in his preface to *On Prayer*; the work itself consists of 153 chapters.[121]

Evagrius' theme of the "place of God" with its "sapphire light" is a reminder of his keen sensitivity to the doctrinal concerns about the knowability and unknowability of God that are associated with his Cappadocian teachers. The uncertainty with which he speaks of the light itself reminds us that his teaching on this point came quite early, long before the great debates over such light in the Hesychast controversy. As

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[117] *Antirrhētikos* 7.31 (Frankenberg, 534.21–23). Indeed, according to *Reflections* 20, the attainment of imagelessness is what constitutes "the place of God." The term ἀνείδεος is also used for divine knowledge (*Prayer* 69), a mirroring of νοῦς and γνῶσις analogous to the ambiguity about the origin of the light seen as prayer.

[118] *Thoughts* 40; the verb is ἐκτυποῦν. For another unusual use of "imprinting" language, see *K.G.* 5.41–42 on the intellectual world "imprinted" and "constructed" in the mind, seen best during prayer at night when sensory light is diminished.

[119] Cf. *Reflections* 2 and 4. On caution against seeking color in prayer, see *Prayer* 114.

[120] *Life of Moses* 2.241 (SC 1bis:109).

[121] In the prologue to *Prayer*, Evagrius presents his total of 153 both in terms of John 21 and the arithmological significance of a number which is susceptible to several kinds of Pythagorean symbolic interpretation (on this point, see Tugwell's commentary on the Prologue in his edition of *Prayer*). Evagrius' allusion to John 21 emphasizes the contrast between his own fruitless toil before he received the request for the treatise and the abundance which the request produced (cf. John 21.3–6); he does not explicitly mention the unburst net, though that point is made in the same verse as the count of 153 fish (John 21.11).

noted earlier, when Evagrius wrote his treatise *On Prayer* he was reticent about the experience of light in prayer. He was surely being alert to the dangers of self-deception. But his teaching on the place of prayer, the place of God, and the sapphire-blue light points us to another reason: when the stakes were highest, he preferred more certain ground, which for him meant more explicitly *biblical* ground.

Evagrian Exegesis

In the "place of God" we find ourselves at the meeting point of experience and exegesis. For Evagrius, exegesis was not about finding suitable garnish for his theological speculations or merely an aspect of monastic pedagogy. It was a mode of being, a keying himself into texts recited by heart day in and day out. He wrote that monastic life means "knocking on the doors of Scripture with the hands of the virtues" (*Thoughts* 43). As Luke Dysinger has reminded us in his work on Evagrius and psalmody, the longest work by far we have from Evagrius' pen is his commentary on the Psalms. When that commentary is added to the scholia on Job, this vastness of biblical material points to what was central in Evagrius' own life and most important for his original readers.

Does Evagrius write enough about his understanding of Scripture to reconcile his use of biblical imagery with the strict exclusion of concepts in prayer? Like most early Christian exegetes, he provides little in the way of explicit rules or guidelines for interpretation. What he has to say is not especially gripping. Evagrius' description of exegesis is more systematic, even reductionistic, than his practice of it, and his practice in the scholia and other texts is closely tied to his theological system. As one would expect of a student of Origen, Evagrius speaks readily of the historical or literal versus the allegorical or spiritual sense of texts, with strong preference for the latter.[122] He relates both levels of meaning to his tripartite schema of *praktikē*/*theōria physikē*/*theologia*, suggesting that both the literal and the spiritual sense can be keyed to one of the three kinds of knowledge.[123] His greatest concern is a

[122] E.g., *Proverbs* 23.1–3 (G 250–51), 29.11 (G 363); *Psalms* 65.16 (PG 12:1501D), 113.8 (PG 12:1572A–73D), 118.18 (PG 12:1592B), 134.6 (PG 12:1653B), 135.6 (PG 12:1656C–57A).

[123] See the discussion of *Gnōstikos* 18 and 20. Neither chapter survives in Greek, which makes precise interpretation difficult. It seems from *Gnōstikos* 18 that the literal meaning could apply to πρακτική or θεωρία φυσική but not to θεολογία, whereas the allegorical meaning could apply to any of the three.

pastoral one, that those who teach know what they are doing and offer interpretations appropriate to the needs of those who come for guidance. He does not want spiritual interpretation to be offered before the hearers are ready for it.[124]

In one of the final chapters of *On the Thoughts*, however, Evagrius illustrates how certain *noēmata* are admissible at the highest stages of the life of prayer. His examples are biblical, two from the New Testament and one from the Old (*Thoughts* 41). The basic rule Evagrius offers is this: any direct biblical reference to God, the One beyond matter or form, does not imprint—viz., limit—the mind, but statements about sensory objects will leave impressions on the mind unless they are susceptible to spiritual interpretation.

The example provided from the Old Testament is the most relevant. Evagrius chooses the opening verses of Isaiah's vision of God (Isa 6.1), explaining that its first words, "I saw the Lord" (εἶδον τὸν κύριον seem to make an imprint on the mind but in fact do not, for what signifies (τὸ σημαινόμενον) God cannot imprint. Isaiah's next words, that he saw the Lord "seated on a high and exalted throne" (καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ καὶ ἐπηρμένου) could imprint, for a throne is a physical object that we can picture. However, if the words are properly understood, they do not limit the mind. The key is to move beyond a literal reading of the text, for there was no physical throne in Isaiah's vision. What Isaiah saw with his "prophetic eye," says Evagrius, was his own truest self (his "rational nature"), become the "throne of God" by receiving the knowledge of God.[125] Evagrius thus writes about the "throne of God" in exactly the same way as the "place of God."

Isaiah's *noēma* of God—and Evagrius uses that terminology, though in a kind of reserved sense—is the exceptional case of a depiction that occurs in the highest spiritual state. It is a truly divine depiction, like the light seen at prayer, the "place of God" and the "sapphire-blue light." Isaiah's vision is closely akin to the theophanies in Exodus and Ezekiel. Isaiah sees a place that is no place, an "image" that, like the "place of God," bends Evagrius' normal rules of imagery because it does not confine what it represents. Isaiah becomes the type of one

[124] See especially the chapters on exegesis in the *Gnōstikos*, 16, 18–21, 34; cf. similar concerns in *Proverbs* 17.2 (G153), cf. 23.9 (G 253); *Ecclesiastes* 1.1 (G 1); *Psalms* 118.130 (Pitra, 298) and 134.7 (PG 12:1653C).

[125] Cf. *Proverbs* 25.5 (G 300). The νοῦς or its contemplative activity understood as the throne of Christ is a common theme in *Psalms*, e.g., 9.5 (PG 12:1188C), 46.9 (PG 12.1437B), 88.4–5 (Pitra, 158), 131.11 (Pitra, 331).

who prays truly and purely, just like Moses arriving at the "place of God." Evagrius was brought there by his meditation of Scripture, which for him meant discovery and exploration of a universe of spiritual possibility waiting in the text. As he notes in his letters, it is through reading the Bible that one enters the "chamber in which we behold the holy and hidden Father" (Matt 6.6).[126] In that chamber—another biblically-described space, this time taken from Jesus' teaching on prayer in Matthew's Gospel—one sees beyond the created world and its symbols to the One who made them, anticipating the eschatological journey from diversified knowledge to essential knowledge of the Trinity.

Even at the highest stage of prayer, then, Evagrius takes the imagery of Scripture, hammered thin through spiritual interpretation, and wraps it carefully around his experience, itself shaped by exegesis. At the end of *On the Thoughts*, writing of the two eyes of the soul, he describes the left eye, meant for "contemplation of things that exist" (θεωρία τῶν γεγονότων), and the right eye, destined to behold "the blessed light of the Holy Trinity" at the time of prayer (*Thoughts* 42). Only when both eyes have first been on the Bible does such dual vision become possible, for it is the Bible that provides even the metaphorical place for seeing the blessed Light.

Conclusion

Evagrius was uniquely able to keep in play his teaching on ascetic psychology, his exploration of prayer, his reflection on the Bible, and his cosmic imagination. Evagrius' complex vision of the monastic life fragmented in the fires of controversy, shattering both his writings and his reputation. Admittedly, his effort to connect both the workings of the human mind and his exegetical strategies to the imperative of imageless prayer is difficult and idiosyncratic. I have suggested that Evagrius' fascination with the theological framework sketched by Origen and developed by Evagrius himself in a more systematic manner may help to explain why he undertook this complex task. It is impossible for us to know at this distance whether he was motivated primarily by his own intellectual and spiritual needs or by those of the monks who came to him eager to address the pressing philosophical questions of the day within a monastic theological framework.

[126] *Letters* 4.5 (Frankenberg, 568.31–32).

Nonetheless, the tension Evagrius explored and attempted to resolve is familiar to anyone who now studies those shaped by the same philosophical and theological currents as he was. The heirs of Hellenistic Christianity in its various cultural and linguistic expressions kept facing the conundrum of biblical and devotional imagery for a God who is beyond human understanding, yet believed to have become human in Jesus Christ. The tendency has usually been to escape the tension by moving to one side or other, often in reaction to perceived abuses or threats. Some theologians rose to the theological and polemical challenges. Pseudo-Dionysius glorified in the paradox, while Maximus, John Damascene, and, much later, Symeon and Gregory Palamas negotiated the tension. With the dramatic appearance of Islam in the seventh century, the largely Christian land in which Evagrius lived his monastic life was swept into a radically imageless—though imaginative and text-grounded—approach to God. Christians of the Byzantine Empire would fight long over the place of visual imagery in Christian prayer and worship, and then about experiences of light in prayer. Islam, iconoclasm, Hesychasm line up with the Anthropomorphite controversy of Evagrius' day in testimony that the struggle to understand a God unseen is fundamental to the great religious traditions of the Middle East. As we have seen, even the biblical text that gave him his fundamental spatial metaphor for prayer, "the place of God," was a Hellenistic Jewish nuancing of a more explicit Hebrew text.

Today, as images explode around us in a stunning array of media manipulated to entertain, entice, and sell, Evagrius' analysis of the powerful effects of imagery and his concern that we not mistake the virtual for the actual encourage deeper reflection on the effects of imaging technology on religious culture. Assumptions about the very basis of human knowing lurk in our daily lives even though description and hermeneutics of experience are more evident in the discourse. Evagrius had the insight and finesse ato engage all three aspects of the issue. That he left a tenuous resolution and a host of unanswered questions underscores his most important insight, that in the "place of God" neither expectation nor satisfaction follows the usual rules.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE LORD'S PRAYER: A CORNERSTONE OF EARLY BAPTISMAL EDUCATION

Roy Hammerling

The Handing Over of the Lord's Prayer in Early Baptismal Education

The Christian Church during the fourth century surrounded the Lord's Prayer (LP) with a comfortable, yet firm, secrecy. The furtive attitude toward the prayer had already existed for some time in places like Tertullian and Cyprian's third-century Carthage in North Africa, but by the end of the fourth century a more widespread discipline of the secret (*disciplina arcani*) developed in many Christian locales. This view held that, along with other sacred mysteries of the church, like the Eucharist and the Creed, the LP was to be known and prayed by Christians alone, and hidden away from non-Christian outsiders and even those seeking to be baptized. The LP was to be protected from the eyes of the unbaptized and only cherished reverently by the christened faithful. Therefore, during the course of the early church, the LP was primarily utilized within Christian worship, private and group devotions, baptismal ceremonies, education, theology, and polemics. Throughout the fourth century, the mystagogical interpretation and the use of the LP in baptismal catechetic contexts especially developed stronger and more rigid attitudes about protecting the LP from non-Christians. Teachings that emphasized the awe and majesty of the LP encouraged humility before the prayer most acutely in the context of training the newly baptized.

The teachings of Cyril of Jerusalem and Ambrose of Milan represent a high-water mark for commentary that uses language of high respect for the LP, which manifest itself in part in an unsurpassed concern for encompassing the LP within a shroud of secrecy. Even though the majority of commentary upon the LP from the late second until the early sixth century dealt primarily with the education of adult converts, the custom of teaching the LP to neophytes in a mystagogical context

slowly was replaced with the practice of entrusting the mysteries of the LP to converts *before* they had actually been baptized during the late fourth and early fifth centuries.[1] These converts were given the Latin names of *competentes*, "those who seek"; *electi*, "those who have been chosen"; or *illuminandi*, which the Greeks referred to as *photisomenoi*, "those who are to be enlightened."[2] During the late fourth century, and shortly thereafter, new attitudes developed concerning the prayer of Jesus. Very slowly the *disciplina arcani* surrounding the LP became less rigid, and an obvious period of transition can be observed in Christian literature with regard to the LP. The move away from the prior secretive attitude, now allowing catechumens before baptism to learn the LP for practical reasons, had to be defended with clear theological reasoning, because even this slight move represented a major shift in thinking. The great preachers John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Augustine of Hippo in their writings reflect this transitional, new attitude regarding the use of the LP in baptismal catechetic training.

The Lord's Prayer in Augustine's Baptismal Catechesis

Augustine, in particular, wrote more about the LP than any author before him and almost every author after him down to the time of the Reformation. In fact it can be argued that the LP was one of Augustine's favorite scripture texts by virtue of the fact that he was so fond quoting it throughout every phase of his life and teachings.[3] Augustine's reverential attitude even led him to consider the LP not only to be sacramental, but also a sacrament in its own right.

Augustine's examination of the LP in a baptismal-catechetic setting builds upon the fathers of the past, hearkening back especially to the

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[1] Klaus Schnurr has quite appropriately called this the *Initiatorisch-katechetische Auslegung*; Klaus Bernhard Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln* (Frieburg, 1985), p. 277.

[2] For more on all of these and other such terms see Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainright, Edward Yarnold, eds., *The Study of the Liturgy* (New York, 1978), pp. 97ff.

[3] Works where Augustine has sizeable or important commentary on the LP are his *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, *Enchiridion*, Letter 130 to Proba, *On Correction and Grace*, *On Grace and Free Will*, *On the Works of Pelagius*, *On the Gift of Perseverance*, *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, *On the Merits of Sinners*, *Forgiveness*, and *On the Baptism of Infants Against Marcellinus*, *On Nature and Grace*, *On the Perfection of Human Justice*, *On the Sermon on the Mount*, *On Holy Virginity*, *The Rule of St. Augustine*, and Sermons 56–59 just to name a few of the most important works.

explanations of Cyprian. Nevertheless, Augustine's writings on the LP are at the same time strikingly innovative. This is most noticeable in his sermons (see especially, sermons 56–59,[4] written c. 410–412), where the explanation of the LP was presented primarily to *competentes* preparing for baptism during Lent.[5]

The baptismal-catechetic focused comments of Augustine reveal that some North African churches during the late fourth and early fifth century prepared candidates for baptism by leading them through a series of Lenten worship services. In this formal rite of preparation, *competentes* were questioned, or "scrutinized," with regard to certain central teachings of the Christian faith. At the very least the scrutinies included the instruction of the Creed and the LP.[6] Augustine handed over (*traditio*) both the Creed and the LP to *competentes* during Lent in order to teach (*explanatio*) its meaning to them. These catechumens in turn had to demonstrate that they knew these texts by reciting them from memory a week or so after they had received them. In Latin this

[4] Augustine, Sermons 56–59; PL 38:377ff.; Augustine, *Sermons: The Works of Saint Augustine*. Trans. and ed. Edmund Hill, (Brooklyn, 1990), Vol. III/3, pp. 95ff., especially see p. 125 n. 3; Pierre Patrick Verbraken, "Les Sermons CCXV et LVI de Saint Augustin *De Symbolo* et *De Oratione Dominica*," *Revue bénedictine*, 68 (1958), pp. 5–40. Also cf. Froehlich, "The Lord's Prayer in Patristic Literature," The Princeton Seminary Bulletin, Supplemental, vol. 2 (1992), 74ff., which is also chapter 2 in this volume; Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 111f.

[5] Perhaps the earliest sermon by Augustine to *competentes* is Sermon 216, dated by some scholars to 391 or soon after Augustine's ordination as a presbyter. This sermon explains who Augustine believes the *competentes* are, namely, those who seek and ask about salvation. Cf. Edmund Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/6, pp. 167ff.

[6] The history of scrutinies is long and complicated. Early on scrutiny simply meant the time when candidates for membership in the church were in the last stages of preparation for baptism; candidates underwent exorcisms and rigorous character analysis before they were allowed to enter the font. Later on, during the time of Augustine, scrutinies were used to determine whether adult candidates had learned the Creed and other central tenets of the Christian faith. Augustine did not use the term "scrutiny" (*scrutinium*), but the concept was certainly a part of the thinking and practice in his church. E. C. Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London, 1970), p. 256, also offers a broader definition, namely, that scrutinies later on were simply "any assembly in preparation for baptism." For more on the history of catechesis and scrutinies see Michel Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate: The First Six Centuries* (New York, 1979); John H. Westerhoff III and O. C. Edwards, Jr. eds., *A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis* (Wilton, Connecticut, 1981); *Made, Not Born* (Notre Dame, IN, 1976); Aidan Kavanaugh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation* (New York, 1978); J. D. C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London, 1965); Josef Andreas Jungmann, *Handing on the Faith* (New York, 1959); Lawrence D. Folkemer, "A Study of the Catechumenate," *Church History* 15 (1946), pp. 286–307; *Adult Baptism and the Catechumenate*, Vol. 22 in Concilium: Theology in the Age of Renewal (New York, 1967).

was called *redditio* or literally a returning of the LP to those who had had the LP handed over (*traditio*) to them in the first place.[7]

Augustine, John Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia are the earliest authors to teach the LP to *competentes* before they had emerged from the baptismal font; whether Augustine, Chrysostom, or Theodore originated such a practice is highly doubtful. The tone of their writings suggests that they are merely discussing practices that are already in place, or at least recently emerging in the practice of some churches. Nevertheless, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Theodore still considered the mystery and power of the LP to be so great that they only presented the LP to those who were about to be baptized. Thus, they too in their own way guarded the precious pearl of a prayer from outsiders. Most previous authors, however, would have had great deal of difficulty with Augustine's openness to give the LP to catechumens. Such a practice for almost all earlier authors appears to have been unthinkable.

Fortunately, Augustine's writings are much more revealing about what happened in the churches he served. *Competentes*, according to Augustine, received the LP on the Saturday before the fifth Sunday of Lent; this was also the same day that they had for the first time recited the Apostle's Creed and demonstrated that they had at least a basic understanding of their new faith.[8] Then, and only then, did Augustine teach them the LP. First, he taught converts about the nature of God and after that he offered them a prayer which explained the relationship of the believer to that God. Sermon 58, preached on the occasion of the recitation of the Creed states:

> You have given back the Creed, which contains a brief summary of the faith…So fix [the LP] as well firmly in your minds, because you are to give it back in a week's time. As for those who did not give back the Creed very well, they have some time yet to get it by heart; because on Saturday, with everyone present listening, they are going to give it back again—that is the last Saturday, on which you are to be baptized. But in a week from today [i.e., the Saturday before Palm/Passion Sunday] you are going to give back this prayer which you have been given today.[9]

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[7] Cf. Edmund Hill's comments on this in, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/3, p. 106 n. 1.

[8] Cf. Edmund Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/3, p. 125 n. 3.

[9] Sermon 58:1; PL 38:393; partially altered translation of Edmund Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/3, p. 118.

Augustine, the pragmatic pastor, believed that handing over the Creed before the LP made sense. In North Africa around the time of Augustine the recitation of the Creed occurred during worship only three times a year: it was first handed over to the *competentes* during Lent; then it was heard again at the returning of the Creed (*redditio symboli*) by the *competentes*; and finally it was spoken at the profession of faith during the baptismal ceremony. Since the Creed was harder to memorize and because such scant use was made of the Creed in worship—as opposed to the regular and frequent daily liturgical and private praying of the LP—Augustine felt it necessary to teach the Creed in a more thorough manner than the LP. By teaching the *competentes* the Creed first, they had more time to learn it before Easter, when they would need to repeat it from memory during their own baptismal ceremonies. The bishop of Hippo even counseled them not to worry if they were not able to memorize the LP right away, but they should strive to commit it to memory by the time of their baptismal washing. Augustine in Sermon 58 reflects this leniency:

> When you have been baptized, you will have to say [the LP] daily. For the Lord's Prayer is said daily in Church at the altar of God, and the faithful hear it. We are not therefore disturbed by any fear, wondering whether your minds have grasped it with less care: for if any of you have not been able to grasp it perfectly, yet by a daily hearing you will grasp it. That is why, on the day of the Sabbath, before we keep vigil and wait on the mercy of God, it is the Creed and not the Lord's Prayer of which you are to make return. For unless you have a firm grasp of the Creed, you do not hear the Creed daily in Church among the people. So when you have grasped it, say it daily, so as not to forget it; when you rise, when you lie down to sleep, make return of your Creed, return it to the Lord, remind yourselves of it, do not tire of repeating it.[10]

The reciting of the Creed at the moment of their baptisms became the *competentes*' declaration of faith in the Trinity. Through baptism and this declaration they are then free to call upon the Creator of the universe with the familial words "Our Father."[11]

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[10] Sermon 58:12–13; PL 38:299; translation in Edmund Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/3, pp. 124f.

[11] Here Augustine borrowed from Cyprian. Indeed, for the rest of his life Augustine argued that not only *competentes* but also all Christians ought to first learn the Apostle's Creed and then the LP.

Augustine recognized that there might be a theological problem with what he and the North African church was doing: by presenting the LP to *competentes* during Lent, he was teaching them to pray the LP, and call God "Father," before they had been appropriately adopted in baptism. Augustine cautiously puts forth the question that is no doubt on their minds: he wonders out loud in one sermon what they are really doing if they recite the LP at least a week before they entered the font. Are they not claiming a relationship with God that they do not presently have? Perhaps, says Augustine. But he quickly makes an important distinction: Augustine claimed that the mere memorization and recitation of the LP was very different from the act of actually praying it. Indeed, the full benefit of praying the LP will not be fully conveyed to the *competentes* until they were born again in baptism. But if this is true, then what, if anything, happened when the catechumens learned the LP during Lent? Augustine boldly suggested that the LP had a transforming power over those who memorized it even before their baptisms.

The act of learning the LP was like the act of conception, said Augustine; *competentes* who committed the LP to memory were actually "conceived" in the womb of the church. The seed, which brings about this conception, is none other than the LP itself. Augustine said in Sermon 56, "With these words [of the LP], you, as you can see, have begun to have God as your Father. You certainly will have Him as such, when you have been born [in baptism]—although even now, before you are born, you have already been conceived by his seed, to be duly brought forth from the womb of the Church,[12] so to speak, in the font."[13] And so, Augustine justified theologically the practice of handing over of the LP to *competentes* outside of a mystagogical setting. In so doing, Augustine did not lessen the connection between baptism and the LP, but he strengthened it.

A similar idea is presented by Augustine in Letter 130 to Proba. In the midst of his discussion on the LP, Augustine recalls Luke 11:11–13

[12] Joseph Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton, NJ, 1986), p. 115, has noted that Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 4.25 is the first known reference to the baptismal font as a womb; cf. Walter Bedard, *The Symbolism of the Baptismal Font in Early Christian Thought* (Washington, D.C., 1951), pp. 17–36; and Joseph C. Plumpe, *Mater Ecclesia: An Inquiry into the Concept of the Church as Mother in Early Christianity* (Washington, D.C., 1943); Karl Delahaye, *Ecclesia Mater: Chez les Péres des Trois Premieres siécles* (Paris, 1964).

[13] Sermon 56:5; PL 38:379; translation Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/3, p. 97.

(the verses shortly after the LP is taught in Luke's gospel), which read, "Which of you, if he asks his father for bread, will he give him a stone? or if he asks for a fish will give him a serpent? or if he asks for an egg will hand over to him a scorpion?" Augustine explained the verse allegorically and noted that the fish signifies faith, because it lives in the water just as Christians live in the waters of their baptism. Believers, like fish, remain unharmed by the waves of this world because they live underwater, i.e., in baptism. The serpent is opposed to the fish, and therefore represents the evil that the Devil seeks to do to the faithful. Second, the egg symbolizes hope, because the chick is not yet alive, but waits in anticipation of its birth. The scorpion, that is the Devil, is opposed to the egg, or what Christians' hope for in life. Finally, love symbolizes the bread, and the stone represents the stone-hearted who cast love out of their lives.

The comparison of the egg with hope is striking, even if Augustine did not specifically mention the LP in these lines, because Augustine intimately connected the virtue of hope with the LP in a number of his other works, saying specifically that the LP is hope.[14] Thus one might infer that the LP is an egg which has not hatched, but which waits in anticipation of the birth of the chick (the baptized Christian). Augustine compared the LP both with a seed and an egg because it helped him to explain why catechumens were allowed to learn the LP even before they were born out of the watery womb of the church.

Augustine's justification for handing over the LP to catechumens ultimately helped to bring about an end to the rigid secretive *disciplina arcani* surrounding the LP, whether he was aware he was doing this or not. Indeed, it is unlikely he would have wanted such a thing, but nevertheless it appears that this theological reasoning allowed others in the near future to be even more free with the handing over the LP to non-baptized Christians. Similarly, Augustine's influence upon the later church ensured that his interpretation of the LP would remain intimately connected with the Creed and baptism throughout the middle ages and even beyond.

[14] Augustine, Letter to Proba; *Enchiridion* 7, 114–116.

How the handing over of the LP took place elsewhere in the fifth century during is more uncertain. Nathan Mitchell has noted concerning the development of rite of baptism itself that, "Indeed, one could defend the thesis that through the entire period (from 500–1274) there exists no single western rite of initiation, but rather a collection of local rites similar in structure yet divergent in significant details."[15] Before 500 the problem was no different. Today modern scholars debate the development of the scrutiny process quite vigorously.

Jean-Paul Bouhot has noticed that the available liturgical documents of the city of Aquileia in Italy, for example, down to the ninth century do not mention that the LP was a part of the Lenten baptismal scrutinies. According to Bouhot, the *Capitulary of the Gospels* (an early ninth-century work which makes no mention the handing over of the LP) and the *Order of the Scrutinies of Catechumens* (a mid-ninth century writing which includes the LP in its scrutinies) demonstrate that the LP became a part of the formalized baptismal liturgy during Lent in Aquileia in the mid-ninth century.[16]

On the other hand, Pierre Puniet has argued that the LP was a part of the Lenten interrogation process in Aquileia by the fifth century. Puniet connects Chromatius (d. 407), the Bishop of Aquileia (and the acquaintance of Jerome and Ambrose and a defender of John Chrysostom), to a catechetical homily on the LP found in the late sixth-century or early seventh-century Gelasian Sacramentary.[17] Puniet suggested that the Gelasian sermon on the LP actually was written by Chromatius.[18]

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[15] Nathan Mitchell, "The Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," in *Made, Not Born* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 52.

[16] Jean-Paul Bouhot, "Une ancienne homélie catéchétique pour la tradition de l'oraison dominicale," *Augustinianum* 20 (1980), 71f.

[17] For the works of Chromatius on the LP see his Sermon 40 the *Praefatio Orationis Dominicae* in CCSL 9, p. 445 and also in CCSL 9A, pp. 171ff. and in SC 164, pp. 225ff.; and Chromatius' *Tractatus* 28 on Matthew 6:9–15 in CCSL 9A, pp. 328ff. The work of Chromatius on the LP though short deserves our attention for a number of reasons not least of which is that that Chromatius was ordained by Ambrose, he was a friend of Jerome and Rufinius, and was one of the few bishops Chrysostom appealed to after his deposition in 404.

[18] Pierre Puniet, "Les trois homélies catéchétiques du sacramentaire gélasien pour la tradition des évangiles, du symbole et de l'orason dominicale.," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclisiastique* 6 (1905), p. 313, "L'*Expositio Orationis Dominicae* du sacramentaire Gélasian serait donc l'oeuvre de S. Chromatius, évéque d' Aquilée de 388 à 408. Ce n'est

This sermon proved for Puniet that a scrutiny process included the LP and was a part of church practice in Aquileia when Chromatius was there in the late fourth and early fifth centuries.

Bouhot countered this argument by suggesting that Chromatius probably taught *competentes* at the end of the week of Easter, much like Ambrose did in Milan, rather than during Lent like Augustine in North Africa.[19] For Bouhot, this would be more consistent with the historical liturgical evidence.

Chromatius' sermons, however, do not conclusively confirm nor deny Puniet's nor Bouhot's theses with regard to the LP. What is certain is that the LP played an important part in the instruction of the *competentes* in the fifth century in Northern Italy, probably during Lent, or perhaps during the Easter season.[20]

Chromatius' *Sermons on Matthew* (c. 400–407)[21] and the sermon known as the *Preface to the Lord's Prayer* (the sermon the Gelasian Sacramentary borrowed)[22] do not indicate in what context the LP was explained in Aquileia during his day. Both were probably preached by Chromatius sometime late in his life and only offer some veiled references to a baptismal catechetic context.

Relying heavily upon Tertullian and Cyprian for many of his comments, Chromatius acknowledged in his introductory remarks to his sermon on Matthew 6:9–15, in his *Sermons on Matthew*, that it is through baptism that Christians are adopted and have the right to call God Father. As an aside at this point, it must be noted that this raises a problem with works that quote earlier authorities. Is this comment a reflection of Chromatius' situation or merely a reflection of the fact

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évidemment qu'une hupothése, mais elle a pour elle bien des raisemblances." Since this sacramentary was very influential, Chromatius had a significant impact upon this later important baptismal rite.

[19] Cf. Chromatius of Aquileia, Sermon 40 in SC 164, pp. 7ff., does not offer any clear indication of when it was preached. Also see the relevant works of Chromatius in CCSL 9, pp. 429ff., Tractatus XIV on Matthew 6:9–15 and in the same volume, pp. 445ff., and Chromatius's *Praefatio Orationis Domincae*; CCSL 9A, pp. 329ff. and Tractatus 28 on Matthew 6:9–15. For more on the liturgical context of Chromatius see SC 164, pp. 91ff.

[20] Cf. Bouhot, Une ancienne homélie catéchétique, p. 72; Pierre de Puniet, Les trois homélies catéchétiques, *Revue d'Histoire Ecclisiastique* 4 (1904), pp. 505–521, 755–786; *Revue d'Histoire Ecclisiastique* 6 (1905): pp. 170–179, 304–318.

[21] Chromatius of Aquileia, Sermon 14 CCSL 9, pp. 429ff., and Sermon 28 CCSL 9A, pp. 328, are the same sermon both of which deal with Matthew 6:9–15, or the section on the LP. The sermons may also be found in SC 154 & 164; PL 20:357ff.

[22] CCSL 9, pp. 445; PL 74;1091ff.

that he is quoting Tertullian's and Cyprian's views on the LP? Could both hold the same views? Often it is impossible to know for sure.

Chromatius' initial remarks in his *Preface to the Lord's Prayer* concern the secrecy of prayer; this secrecy is grounded in Matthew 6:6, "But you when you shall pray, enter into your chamber, and having shut the door, pray to your Father in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you." Unlike the *disciplina arcani* of Ambrose and others, Chromatius was not worried about keeping the LP a secret for fear it would fall into the hands of unbelievers; rather, he wanted believers to enter into the "secret place of their hearts" in order to shut out the evils of the world, so that they might be open to Christ alone. Ultimately this is an appeal to live an upright life. Chromatius noted:

> When [Jesus] says a closet, he does not mean some hidden place, but reminds us that the secret places of our hearts should be open to him alone. And that we should shut the door when we worship God means this, that with a mystic key we should shut our breast to evil thoughts and with closed lips and pure minds speak to God. For God hears our faith, not our voice. Let therefore our breast be shut with the key of faith against the snares of the adversary, and let it be open to God alone whose temple we know it to be, that as he dwells in our hearts so he may be an advocate in our prayers. Therefore the Word of God and the Wisdom of God, Christ our Lord, taught us this prayer that we should pray thus [with the LP].[23]

Chromatius does note share Ambrose interpretation of this verse, and in so doing may well indicate his context was less secretive about the LP.

Chromatius' sermons may indicate that the *disciplina arcani* surrounding the LP probably was not as rigidly followed in Aquileia as it was in Milan and by Ambrose, but it is impossible to know for sure without other evidence. Chromatius' sermons on the LP are an important synthesis of earlier works, but he offers few original insights. His type of explanation of the LP, founded in earlier thinkers continued after this time and Chromatius' own work influenced many later in the Middle Ages, particularly because his work is mistaken for other famous authors and because it was included in the Gelasian Sacramentary, where it found a wide audience.

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[23] Chromatius of Aquileia, *Praefatio orationis dominicae*, CCSL 9, p. 445; cf. Gelasian Sacramentary 36, *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Aeclesiae Oridinis Anni Circuli*, pp. 51f.; translation in Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, pp. 177ff.; and the *Ordo XI* chapter 69 in Michel Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du Haut Moyen Age.* Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense. Etudes et documents, (Louvain, 1931–61), vol. 2, p. 437.

Another Italian, Peter, known only later with the addition of the title Chrysologus ("of the golden word"), the bishop of Ravenna (d. 450), preached a number of sermons on the LP; they provide further insight into the use of the LP. The actual dates of Peter's LP Sermons 67–72 remain uncertain, but they were preached during Lent for pre-baptismal catechetic purposes over a number of years toward that latter part of his life.

Modern scholars have debated whether the LP sermons of Peter Chrysologus indicate whether or not Ravenna used the LP in baptismal catechesis during Peter's day.[24] Bouhot believed that the evidence supports the claim that the LP was a part of post-baptismal catechesis. Others, such as Verbraken and Schnurr, correctly have pointed out that the handing over of the LP occurred during pre-baptismal catechesis in Ravenna during Lent.[25] Puniet concludes that the Northern African baptismal practice of handing over the LP during Lent, which predates the Northern Italian practice, influenced the practice in Ravenna.[26] Peter clearly knew Augustine's writings and this connection may have been what influenced Northern Italian practices.

Chrysologus mentioned that at least a part of his audience for his LP sermons were catechumens awaiting baptism. Sermon 70 stated that even though the *competentes* have not yet been born again in baptism, they nevertheless live not only in anticipation of their birth in the womb, but in possession of the gifts that they have yet to receive.[27] Chrysologus perhaps—and probably—borrowed this basic idea from Augustine, who also used the "womb" language.

Chrysologus, however, made no Augustinian distinction between pre-baptismal "saying" and post-baptismal "praying" of the LP. Rather, he believed that even in the "womb" the catechumen has the right to call God "Father" because catechumens already "are" sons and daughters of God. Chrysologus wrote, "No one should be astonished that one not yet born calls Him Father. With God, beings who will be born are

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[24] Peter Chrysologus, Sermons 67–72; CCSL 24A, pp. 402ff.; PL 52:390–406; Sermons 67 and 70 in FC 17, pp. 115ff. Thanks to the groundbreaking work of Alexandri Olivar, most scholars identify 168 authentic sermons with Peter Chrysologus, but the actual number is still a matter of debate.

[25] Bouhot, *Une ancienne homélie catéchétique*, p. 73; Pierre Patrick Verbraken, "Les sermons CCXV et LVI de saint Augustin 'De symbolo' et 'De oratione domica'," *Revue Bénedictine* 68 (1958), pp. 5–40; Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, p. 250.

[26] Puniet, *Les trois homélies catéchétiques*, RHV 6 (1905), pp. 315ff.

[27] Peter Chrysologus, CCSL 24A, pp. 431; FC 17, p. 120.

already born; with God future beings have been made. 'The things that shall be,' scripture says, 'have already been.'"[28] Peter thus noted that the uninitiated actually "pray" the LP even before their baptisms. In fact, the son and daughter of God in the womb participate fully in the benefits of all adopted sons and daughters who have been born out of the baptismal font and therefore have the right to call upon God as "Father."

Peter Chrysologus presented three biblical examples in defense of his ideas that unbaptized catechumens participate in their future baptismal adoption. First, Chrysologus compared this pre-baptismal state of catechumens to John the Baptist, who "leaped" in the womb of his mother Elizabeth when she met the pregnant-with-baby-Jesus Mary (Luke 1). Though not yet born, John's reaction indicated that he already had the ability to recognize Jesus and dedicate himself to his own salvation. Catechumens similarly in the womb already recognize Jesus to be their Savior and have already taken the first steps in following him. Therefore they have the full benefits of such an action, namely son or daughterhood. First comes the hearing of the faith and then the actual faith, but in both cases it is the same faith even if it comes before baptism ("in a womb" so to speak, and in the act of kicking a mother's belly).[29]

Chrysologus also pointed at the stories of Jacob (the twin of Esau in Genesis 30) and Tamar's twins (Genesis 38) as representative examples of those who were chosen for salvation even before the foundation of the earth or their births. Jacob contended with Esau (both before and after their births) to win the birthright which God desired him to have. Tamar's twins struggled with each other in a like manner while still in the womb; thus, even before their physical births these two different sets of twins sought to further the kingdom of God and to fulfill God's plan for their lives.[30] In the same way Peter suggested the *competentes* had already begun to struggle for the kingdom in the womb when the catechumens were impregnated with the LP, that is learned and prayed the LP with all the rights and privileges of a fully born Christian.

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[28] Peter Chrysologus, Sermon 70; CCSL 24A, p. 421; translation in FC 17, p. 119.

[29] Peter Chrysologus, Sermon 67; CCSL 24A, p. 402; cf. FC 17, p. 115.

[30] Peter Chrysologus discussed John and Jacob in Sermon 69 in CCSL 24 A, p. 418 and Sermon 70 in CCSL 24A, p. 421; and John, Jacob, and Tamar's twins in Sermon 72, CCSL 24A, pp. 431f.

Concluding Thoughts

There are other works which mention the LP and baptismal catechesis from this time, but they are all anonymous works whose attribution to author and place are very difficult to make. These writings confirm the idea that the late fourth and early fifth century was a time of transition for how the LP was treated with regard to baptismal catechesis.[31]

[31] A list of anonymous fifth-century LP commentaries and some brief summary concerning them are as follows:

First, a sermon commonly attributed to Pseudo-Quodvultdeus on the LP has had some scholarly work done on it. G. Morin thought that the sermons of Quodvultdeus and a LP homily in Wolfenbüttel Codex 4096 (which is a collection of sermons attributed to Augustine) were similar. So he attributed this sermon to Quodvultdeus, who became bishop of Carthage c. 437. Cf. G. Morin, *Augustini tractatus* (Kempten: 1917), p. 181, also Ps.-Quodvultdeus, *De dominica oratione* in PLS 3:299–303. For more on Quodvultdeus see Augustine's *epistulae* 221 and 223 and Augustine's *On Heresies* (PL 42:21–50), and Quodvultdeus *De promissionibus Dei*; SC 101; CCSL 60; and V. Saxer, *Saints anciens d' Afrique du Nord*, (Vatican City, 1979), pp. 184ff. Many modern scholars, however, have considered Morin's attribution impossible to confirm (cf. Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, p. 235). The sermon is probably from fifth-century North Africa or Italy, and it most likely concerns the handing over the LP to catechumens during Lent. The sermon may draw on Peter Chrysologus' LP writings. For example, the style and content of the Pseudo-Quodvultdeus introduction echoes Chrysologus. For example, the anonymous author boldly stated, "Prayer pierces heaven, strikes the ears of God, obtains the key of indulgence, cleanses the vessel of our bodies, and adorns the temple of the spirit with holiness" (Ps-Quodvultdeus, *De dominica oratione*; PLS 3: 299). This evidence suggests that this sermon was preached no earlier than the 450's (Schnurr in *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 235 and 248 n. 42).

Second, an anonymous work entitled simply *A Homily on the Lord's Prayer*, which was falsely attributed to Chrysostom, Jean-Paul Bouhot has suggested is from Northern Africa dating to the time of Augustine. Cf. Bouhot, "Une ancienne homélie catéchétique, pp. 69–78. Klaus Schnurr remains uncertain about authorship, date, or place; however, he feels that this sermon and Pseudo-Quodvultdeus may share similar origins. Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 250 and 259 n. 31. The sermon reflects no themes from later than the turn-of-the-fifth century and certainly was written before the time of Caesarius of Arles (d. 542). Pseudo-Chrysostom was familiar with the interpretative tradition of the LP at least up through the time of Augustine. A few references may even be allusions to Peter Chrysologus and Chromatius of Aquileia. The commentary itself has no unique insights or historically distinguishing remarks beyond the fact that it is a sermon for adult catechumens, which would also help to place it no earlier than the time of Augustine. Cf. Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 250ff.

Third, another anonymous homily, known as Pseudo-Augustine Sermon 65 (PL 39) has drawn little scholarly interest. Klaus Schnurr and P. Vallin have written about it but both admit that there is little to say concerning its historical context other than the fact that it is a typical LP catechetical sermon presented for catechumens probably from the fifth century; Schnurr, *Hören und Handeln*, pp. 135ff. and P. Vallin, "'Prex Legitima': Pseudo-Augustine, Sermon 65.1," *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 26 (1980), pp. 303ff.

In the end, we may conclude that there was a recognizable transition in attitudes about the LP in baptismal catechesis at the end of the fourth and into the fifth century. First, authors like Ambrose, Didymus, and Cyril of Jerusalem adhered to a rigid restriction trying to keep the LP from any but baptized ears and eyes. However, Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom indicate that the practical concern of having catechumens ready to pray the LP immediately after baptism moved them to teach the LP to catechumens during Lent. They did not provide a clear theological justification for such a move; however, slightly later authors did so, probably out of the necessity of having catechumens know the prayer upon emerging from the baptismal font. Augustine felt it necessary to justify his actions with an argument which suggested that the LP was a seed impregnating catechumens so that

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Fourth, a work entitled *An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, which has been falsely attributed to Fortunatus in some manuscripts, has gone virtually undiscussed by scholars. For a list of early printed editions of the Fortunatus' LP Commentary see D. Tardi, *Fortunat. Etude sur un dernier représentant de la poésie latine dans la Gaule mérovingienne* (Paris, 1927), p. ix. For editions of these works see PL 88:59–592 (PL 88:313–322 the *Expositio orationis dominicae* section) with the PL 88 being a reproduction of the edition of the Benedictine A. Lucchi (Rome, 1786–87). The critical edition is *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Auctorum antiquissimorum* (MGH AA) 4:1–2. The commentary appears in Book 10 of a collection entitled *The Songs* (the *Carmina*, a.k.a. the *Miscellanea*, Book 10). Significantly it appears alongside *An Explanation of the Apostle's Creed* (*Expositio Symboli*). For more on the manuscript tradition see MGH AA 4/1, pp. v–xxv. Some believe that this LP sermon was written late in Fortunatus' life (c. 590–600, when he was a bishop). Judith W. George, *Venantius Fortunatus: A Latin Poet in Merovingian Gaul* (Oxford, 1992), p. 208ff., talks about the differing views of Koebner and Meyer, who suggests that the later collection was made by friends of Venantius. A few scholars have accepted Venantius as the author of the LP homily simply because it appears in the critical edition, while others have remained skeptical. Some authors who have considered Fortunatus to be the author of the *Expositio orationis dominicae* are Joseph Vives, Morton W. Bloomfield, and P. G. Walsh. In the most detailed argument on this work, Walsh in a brief article, "Venantius Fortunatus" *The Month* 120 (1960), pp. 292–302, discusses the importance of this work in regard to the Fortunatus' corpus. Judith W. George's *Venantius Fortunatus: A Latin Poet in Merovingian Gaul* offers (in appendix 2, p. 210) a passing reference to the LP commentary, "Of the two final books (of the *Carmina*), the first poem in Book 10 is a prose dissertation on the Lord's Prayer, which appears to be incomplete." In the critical edition itself, MGH AA 4/1, p. 24, Fridericus Leo has noted that there has been some dispute over various works of Fortunatus, but earlier editors included the *Expositio orationis dominicae* as being a part of the manuscript tradition and therefore he included it in his critical edition. *Teuffel's History of Roman Literature* by George C. W. Warr, vol. 2 (New York, 1967), p. 555 (paragraph 491.5) simply accepts Fortunatus' authorship without any explanation.

Paul Antin, however, in his comments on the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* noted in vol. 5, p. 725, "On peut négliger son *Expositio symboli* d'apres Rufin (11,1; MGH, p. 253–258, and PL 88:345–351), et son *Expositio orationis dominicae* (10,1; MGH, pp. 21–119, and PL 88:313–322), encore que ce dernier texte puisse donner lieu des remarques intéressantes." Many standard reference works do not mention the *Expositio orationis*

they might soon be born Christians in baptism and have the right to pray the LP and call God "Father." Peter Chrysologus certainly continues along the lines first laid out by Augustine in finding clever theological justification for giving the LP to catechumens. Peter's justifications demonstrate that attitudes about handing over the LP had developed over a relatively short period of time. Peter is unwavering in his view that even the uninitiated have the right to call God Father

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dominicae in their discussions of Fortunatus. In this regard see especially the *Lexicon für Theologie und Kircke*, Max Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (München, 1911), Michael Grant, *Greek and Latin Authors: 800 B.C.–A.D. 1000* (New York, 1980), F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1957), Vol. 1, and Franz Brunhölzl, *Geschichte der Lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*.

Internal evidence, however, suggests the probability that this work was written during the fifth century and therefore excludes the authorship of Fortunatus. One historic reference in particular points to this conclusion. The author argued that converts have the right to call God "Father" after baptism. However, after baptism believers still may reject their heavenly Father if they stray from the faith either by doctrinal error or moral conduct. The notion that baptism can be undone is reminiscent of Caesarius of Arles writing on the LP, but does not suggest this author knew Caesarius, because the opposite may also be true, namely, that Caesarius knew this author. The author declared that God is not for, "Arius, the Jews, Photinus, Manichaeus, and Sabellius" and therefore whoever follows them has Satan as their Father. MGH AA 4.1:13, p. 223 states, "Also, it is well that (the words) "Our Father" are added (to this prayer), because unless one believes rightly in Christ he is not able to have a Father in heaven. For the Father himself is not for Arius, a Jew, Photinus (Bishop of Sirmium, d. 376), Manichaeus, Sabellius (third century) and the remaining pestilence, or those who have been cut down with a perversely poisonous scythe of an infected heart and of the worst kind of confession. These have been unjustly counted as being from the Son as much as from God our Father; (the heretic) sins against the Father (being of) the devil's own fruit. Therefore the Father in heaven is for us, who rightly confess the Son on earth." The Jews were often condemned by Christians for not recognizing Christ as the Messiah and numerous LP commentaries reflect this sentiment; Photinus, appears to be the Bishop of Sirmium in Galatia (d. 376), who was condemned by both Eastern and Western Churches during the fourth century for his Monarchian tendencies; Manichaeus and his followers challenged the Catholic church during the third to the fifth centuries; Sabellianism for the most part was of little concern by the fifth century; but Arianism troubled orthodox Christianity during the fourth to the sixth centuries Arianism and was considered a problem in parts of Europe (including France) until the seventh century. Henry G. J. Beck, *The Pastoral Care of Souls in South-East France During the Sixth Century* (Rome, 1950), pp. 43 & 184. A similar list of heretics comes from the fifth century *Paschal Song* of Sedulius which attacked Sabellius, Arius, and the Jews. However, he made no mention of the Manichaeans or Photinus. For more on the context of Sedulius in these matters see Carl P. E. Springer, *The Gospel as Epic in Late Antiquity: The* Paschale Carmen *of Sedulius* (Leiden, 1988), pp. 36ff. The inclusion of Arius and the Jews might reflect late sixth and early seventh centuries' concerns, or the time of Fortunatus. However, the earlier heresies were not of particular concern during Fortunatus' day. The practice of referring to earlier heresies by later authors is not uncommon; nevertheless, an earlier fifth century date would make more sense in light of the complete list. The baptismal catechetic context reflected in this work also points to a fifth century date. The author does not mention a Lenten handing over

in prayer. The initial praying of the LP therefore literally becomes the point of conception and adoption in the womb, if not the actual spiritual birth, and the point when converts truly can claim God to be their Father. Once the door had been opened to allowing catechumens learn the LP before baptism, the shroud of secrecy slowly became less and less of a concern and eventually would disappear altogether.

of the LP to converts and mentioned that it was only after baptism that the believer had a right to pray the words "Our Father." Therefore, the work reflects Augustine's theology on the LP, but not the later fifth-century ideas of Peter Chrysologus or Pseudo-Quodvultdeus. The sixth-century concerns of Caesarius of Arles to educate parents, godparents, and children with the LP in baptismal catechesis is completely absent from the *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, which if it was written by Fortunatus would have post-dated Caesarius by half a century. Once again a fifth-century date seems most probable.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO: PRAYER AS SACRAMENT

Roy Hammerling

Augustine of Hippo regularly commented on the Lord's Prayer (LP) in order to educate mature members of the faith and to train pastors theologically with regard to matters of doctrine and Christian living. Sometime after the sack of Rome by King Alaric of the Ostrogoths in 410, Augustine wrote a letter[1] (perhaps in 412) to a Roman noble widow named Proba, who during her life watched three of her own sons sit as consul in Rome. She fled to Africa in the wake of the Ostrogoth turmoil and established a community of religious women in Carthage. Proba on one occasion wrote to Augustine seeking advice on prayer. He responded by sending her a lengthy epistle, a part of which included a full explanation of the LP. The Bishop of Hippo instructed Proba not to put her trust in her considerable riches (some believe her husband was one of the wealthiest men in the Roman Empire), but encouraged her to pray instead for true happiness with unceasing and fervent ardor.[2] After cautioning her not to pray with an abundance of words, Augustine noted that words were nevertheless necessary. While Jesus was on earth, he, unlike other people, had no need of words in his prayers, either to be informed or influenced by them; still he used them, like the words of the LP, and so they must also be beneficial for believers.

Augustine told Proba that the words of the LP have a twofold function. First, they have the power to make the petitioners aware of what they need to pray for. Second, they actually create a desire for what is prayed and encourage those who pray them to lead godly lives. For example, when Christians pray the first three petitions, they long for God's name to be holy, God's kingdom to come, and God's will to be done in all people. The fourth petition ("Give us today our daily bread")

[1] CSEL 44, pp. 40–77; translation in FC 18, pp. 376–401.
[2] John Leinenweber ed., *Letters of Saint Augustine* (Liguoiri, Missouri, 1992), p. 160.

is actually a longing for Christ, the bread of heaven, or eternal happiness. The last three petitions move petitioners to desire forgiveness and to forgive earnestly, to escape from temptation, and to seek deliverance from evil. Finally the words of the LP reveal and encourage what God hopes to impress upon the hearts, minds, and lives of all.[3]

Augustine then offers a brief petition-by-petition analysis after which he states that "all" properly offered prayers seek those truths which are embodied in the LP. Augustine like Cyprian[4] went so far as to say that false prayer is any request which pursues something outside of the parameters of the seven petitions of the LP. Augustine warned, "But, whoever says anything in his prayer which does not accord with this Gospel prayer [i.e., the LP], even if his prayer is not of the forbidden sort, it is carnal, and I am not sure it ought not to be called forbidden, since those who are born again of the spirit ought to pray only in a spiritual manner."[5]

At this point in the discussion Augustine makes his only allusion to baptism in his letter to Proba. To pray in a way that is contrary to the spirit of the LP is sinful, in other words the way Christians would have prayed before they were baptized. But after being baptized, those who are born again in the spirit need to pray spiritually or in a way consistent with the LP. Thus, the LP was Augustine's model and a rule by which all righteous prayer was to be judged.

Augustine embellished this point rather forcefully by presenting seven brief prayers which reflect the concerns of each of the seven petitions of the LP. However, Augustine readily acknowledged that it is not always easy to tell how some prayers conform to the LP. For example, Hannah's prayer for God to end her barrenness[6] does not appear to be related to any of the seven petitions. Augustine did conclude that Hannah's words are to be understood in light of the seventh petition, "Deliver us from evil," because Hannah's barrenness is an evil that she wishes to be delivered of. Therefore, all true prayers always conform to the LP even if they do not necessarily appear to be so at first glance. Augustine concluded his comments by boldly declaring, "And if you were to run over all the words of holy prayers, you would find nothing, according to my way of thinking, which is not contained and included

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[3] CSEL 44, pp. 65ff.; FC 18, pp. 392f.
[4] Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 9; CCSL 3 A, p. 94.
[5] Augustine's Letter 130; CSEL 44, p. 65; translation in FC 18, p. 393.
[6] 1 Kings 2 in Latin or Vulgate translation bibles; 1 Samuel 2 in modern bibles.

in the Lord's Prayer. Hence when we pray, it is allowable to say the same things in different words, but it ought not to be allowable to say different things."[7]

Augustine also briefly developed a theme in his letter to Proba that he discussed more fully in his *Enchiridion*.[8] For Augustine, the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, along with the LP, work together to bring Christians into a closer relationship with God. Augustine claimed, "Therefore, 'faith, hope, and love' lead to God those who pray—that is, those people who believe, hope, and desire and who consider what they ask of the Lord in the Lord's Prayer."[9]

Laurentius, a "spiritual son" of Augustine, wrote to the Bishop of Hippo c. 421 asking him to compose an *Enchiridion* (i.e., a "handbook") in order to answer some questions about the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Augustine responded by saying, "Now, undoubtedly, you will know the answers to all these questions, if you know thoroughly the proper objects of faith, hope, and love. For these must be the chief, nay, the exclusive objects of pursuit in religion. He who speaks against these is either a total stranger to the name of Christ, or is a heretic."[10] Augustine then stated that the basic elements of the Christian faith may be summarized in the two essential prayers of the church, the Apostle's Creed and the LP.[11] These prayers correspond to the three theological virtues. Faith, which believes, is represented by the Creed. Hope and love, which pray, are represented by the LP.[12] The overall structure of the *Enchiridion* emphasizes this connection. Chapters 1–113 explain the Apostle's Creed and faith; chapters 114–116 discusses the LP and hope; and chapters 117–122 deal with love, which is God, the object of prayer and the fulfillment of all that believers seek and desire. Augustine primarily related the LP with the virtue of hope, even though at times he equated it with love as well.[13]

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[7] Augustine, Letter 130; CSEL 44, p. 66; translation in FC 18, p. 394.

[8] A.k.a. *The Enchiridion of Faith, Hope, and Love* or *Enchiridion de fide, spe, et caritate*.

[9] Augustine, Letter 130; CSEL 44, p. 68. For an alternate translation see FC 18, p. 395.

[10] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 4; CCSL 46, p. 50; translation in Augustine, *The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love*, Henry Paolucci trans. (Washington D.C., 1961), p. 4.

[11] Cf. Augustine's Sermons 56–59.

[12] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 7; CCSL 46, p. 51. Later scholars connected the LP to the three theological virtues and even the seven heavenly virtues to the seven petitions. For example see in particular Hugh of St. Victor, Peter Lombard, Jordan of Quedlinburg, and Johannes Herholt.

[13] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 7; CCSL 46, p. 51.

The LP and the Creed together complement each other in such a way that taken together they encompass the whole of the Christian faith. Through the Creed and faith Christians come to know the God in whom they believe. With the LP, they call upon this God with a certain hope that God, who is love, will answer their prayers. They cannot call upon a God that they do not know, nor can they call upon God without the words of hope in the LP.[14]

In works other than Augustine's *Enchiridion*, the LP and the Creed were often discussed together in early church documents; the earliest documents which included these two prayers side by side come from the turn-of-the-fifth century. Both Ambrose and Augustine often commented on them at the same time. The two prayers were linked because they were both taught in baptismal-catechesis (see chapter six of this book for more on this). The *Enchiridion*, which was written toward the end of Augustine's life, is one of the best examples of how the association between the Creed and LP were used to summarize the entirety of the faith for mature members.

For Augustine the LP gives hope because of the fifth petition on forgiveness. The brief section on the LP in the *Enchiridion*, chapters 114–116, follows a lengthy and detailed analysis of the Creed. Augustine in these later chapters does not discuss the LP in any great detail (nor does he offer a verse-by-verse analysis) because he has already mentioned it six times in chapters 1–113. In each of these instances Augustine principally discussed what he called "the thunderous warning"[15] of the fifth petition. Christians, all of whom continue to sin after their baptisms, have to be cautious concerning the fifth petition because of its conditional clause, "Forgive us our debts, *as* we forgive our debtors." Sinners must forgive others if they wish to be forgiven themselves. This warning when heeded can raise those who are dead in sin to new life in Christ; if it is ignored eternal condemnation results.[16] Thus, the fifth petition, and by extension the entire LP, offers the hope of salvation.

Augustine even went so far as to state in the *Enchiridion* that praying the LP daily makes satisfaction for daily sins, or sins of a more venial nature. Augustine wrote, "This [Lord's] prayer certainly takes away the very small sins of daily life. It takes away also those which at one time

[14] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 7; CCSL 46, p. 51.
[15] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 74; CCSL 46, p. 89.
[16] Cf. Augustine, *Enchiridion* 22, 71, 73, 74, 78, 81.

made the life of the believer very wicked, but which, now that he is changed for the better by repentance, he has given up, provided that as truly as he says, 'Forgive us our debts' [for there is no want of debts to be forgiven], so truly does he say, 'as we forgive our debtors.'"[17] Serious sins, of course, are washed away in baptism and after baptism greater sins require not only prayer for forgiveness, but a radical amendment of life together with a willingness to forgive the sins of others. Alms given out of mercy likewise cleanse the soul of sin, but the greatest of all alms, for Augustine, is that of a Christian forgiving the sinful debt of another.[18]

Augustine's preoccupation with the fifth petition insured that it would also be a frequent topic in his sermons, where he emphasized this petition more than any of the others. Sermon 213 (written c. 410–412) further clarifies why "daily" prayer of the LP, and the fifth petition, is so important. Since Augustine believed that Christians are not allowed to be baptized more than once, Christians need another way of returning to the baptismal font when they sin; they need a "daily" baptism, in order to deal with daily sins. Sermon 213 makes the remarkable claim that the LP is a "daily baptism" and an important means by which sinful believers may be reconciled to God regularly. Christians appropriate God's forgiveness not only through amendment of life and alms, but through two baptisms; the first baptism in the waters of the font and the second baptism in the words of the LP. In particular the praying of the fifth petition manifests this second baptism in the lives of believers. The wonderful gift of this daily baptism, noted Augustine, ought to move the recipients of so great a grace to thankful praise.[19]

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[17] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 71; CCSL 46, p. 88; translation in Augustine, *The Enchiridion*, Henry Paolucci, p. 84.

[18] Augustine, *Enchiridion* 70–80; CCSL 46, pp. 87ff. For a similar idea see Augustine *In Johannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV* 124.5.

[19] Augustine, Sermon 213:9; *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, Vol. 1, *Sancti Augustini Sermones Post Maurinos Reperti* (Rome, 1930), p. 449; translation in Edmund Hill, Augustine's *Sermons*, Vol. III/6, p. 146, "But since we are going to go on living in this world, where nobody can live without sin, for that reason the forgiveness of sins is not confined only to the washing clean of sacred baptism, but is also to be had in the Lord's Prayer which is also a daily prayer, and which you are going to receive in eight days' time. In it you will find, as it were, your daily baptism. So you must thank God for having granted his Church this gift, which we confess in the Creed; so that when we say *in the holy Church*, we join unto it *in the forgiveness of sins*." Note that this emphasis upon two baptisms is similar to an idea in Cyprian, namely, that the praying of the LP, because it seeks forgiveness of sins, is a type of baptism, which washes away sin. Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 12; CCSL 3 A, pp. 96f.; translation in FC 36, p. 136.

Augustine in a few of his sermons on the Gospel of John presented a similar point. Augustine in his discussion about the story concerning Jesus washing the feet of the disciples (John 13) notes that the water symbolizes both baptism and the LP. Both wash away sins in the same way dirt was washed away from the disciples' feet by Jesus.[20]

The strong emphasis that Augustine placed upon the LP as a means of the forgiveness of sins is something that he returned to frequently. In fact, in the context of his sermons this is the one theme that Augustine reiterates more often than any other with regard to the LP. Excluding Sermons 56–59, where he deals with all the petitions in a verse by verse fashion, the sermons of Augustine which refer to the LP almost invariably focus upon the fifth petition and forgiveness. The following sermons (and their approximate dates) all include discussions of fifth petition: Sermon 9 written c. 420, Sermon 16A c. 411, Sermon 17 c. 425–431?, Sermon 47 c. 414, Sermon 49 c. 420, Sermons 56–59 c. 410–412, Sermon 114 c. 424, Sermon 135 c. 417, Sermon 155 c. 419, Sermon 163 c. 417, Sermon 163B c. 410, Sermon 179 c. before 409, Sermon 181 c. 416, Sermon 211 c. before 410, Sermon 213 c. 410, Sermon 278 c. 414, Sermon 315 c. 416/417, Sermon 352 c. 398, Sermon 383 uncertain date, and sermon 385 uncertain date.[21] Augustine believed that the LP continues the work of baptism by offering a means of returning to it daily. This emphasis upon the fifth petition is something that can be seen in other Christian authors of the time as well.[22]

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[20] Augustine *In Johannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV* 57.4, 58.1, 58.6, 59.5.

[21] Dates have been taken from Edmund Hill's analysis of the sermons in Augustine, *Sermons*, 10 volumes. When speaking about this particular petition, Augustine emphasizes how this petition spells out the way by which a person may be forgiven, and that is to forgive in order to be forgiven. This petition, nevertheless, though a part of the LP, also demonstrates one of the key functions (if not the primary function) of the whole prayer, which is to seek forgiveness.

[22] Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 390–463) quoted the fifth petition on at least five occasions in his commentary on the Psalms (*Expositio Psalmorum*). In each case, Prosper encouraged his learned audience to give glory to God in all things. Prosper noted that Christians must pray the fifth petition and seek God's forgiveness, if they wish to walk in the way of the Lord. Indeed, this petition, which Jesus taught, heals the sinner and acknowledges that God alone is worthy of praise. (Prosper of Aquitaine, *Expositio Psalmorum* 118:3, 129:4, 140:5, 142, 144:12; CCSL 67A; pp. 85ff., 142ff., 177ff., 184ff., 192ff.). Thus, Prosper turned to the fifth petition frequently in much the same way Augustine did.

Pope Leo I, Sermons and Letters in CCSL 138, 138A; PLS 3:329–500; PL 54–56; SC 22, 49, 74, 200; English translation of select sermons and letters in LNPF 12, series 2 and FC 34. Leo I referred to the LP in at least five sermons (46, 49, 50, 90, 93). Leo used the LP in two ways. First, he quoted it almost exclusively in his sermons during

Augustine noted in his treatise *On Holy Virginity*[23] that all Christians, even newly baptized converts, are in need of the LP and the fifth petition on forgiveness. If this were not the case, then the church would teach *competentes* to pray the LP up until their baptism and then stop, but instead the church teaches those who are baptized to pray the LP, because all sin and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).[24]

Augustine even mentioned the fifth petition in his rule. Twice he referred to the fifth petition in order to urge Christians not to quarrel, but to be forgiving. Similarly they must also seek forgiveness in order to avoid temptation (the sixth petition).[25]

The preceding evidence indicates that Augustine understood the LP to have a sacramental quality to it. Augustine's understanding of a sacrament

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Lent, or when talking about fasting. Second, like Prosper and Augustine, the primary reason for referring to the LP is to emphasize the fifth petition and forgiveness.

Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540–604) briefly mentioned the LP on four occasions. Twice he referred to the fifth petition stressing the theme that Christians must forgive others if they wish to be forgiven. (Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book 10, ch. 15; PL 75:937; CCSL 143, p. 558; *Homilae in Evangelium* Book 2, Homily 27 on John 15:12–16; PL 76:1204). Gregory also mentioned the third petition and how Christians on earth should seek God's will as the angels of heavens do (Gregory, *Moralia*, Book 27, ch. 39; PL 76:438; CCSL 143B, pp. 1382ff.). Lastly, he spoke of the fourth petition on bread suggesting that the bread is "ours," but rather is a gift from God. Just like "our" righteousness is from God, so also everything believers require in life is a gift of God (Gregory, *Moralia*, Book 24, ch. 7; PL 76:293; CCSL 143, pp. 1196ff.). The preceding references have nothing to do with a baptismal catechetic context. In this context the LP holds no particular importance for Gregory: it is simply one text among all the other texts to be used—in this case rather infrequently—to explain other biblical passages. Gregory the Great, Prosper of Aquitaine, and Pope Leo I do not so much focus on the LP, as they use it to illuminate other ideas or works.

F. E. Vokes, "The Lord's Prayer in the First Three Centuries." *Studia Patristica* 10 (1970), p. 259 also has added about Gregory, "Whatever may have been the action of Gregory the Great, whether he introduced the Lord's Prayer into the Roman Mass or merely changed its position, we should not interpret his statement in *Letters* IX 12 to mean that the Apostles used the Lord's Prayer as a prayer of consecration. In the words 'Quia mos apostolorum fuit ut ad ipsam solummodo orationem oblationis hostiam consecrarent, oblationis' is to be construed with *orationem* to mean that the Apostles only used a prayer of oblation, not the Lord's Prayer, which he Gregory, thinks on the contrary ought not to be omitted…Even if Gregory really meant that the Apostles used the Lord's Prayer for consecration, again it is unlikely that he had any true knowledge of the history of the apostolic liturgy."

[23] Augustine, *De sancta uirginitate*, written c. 401.

[24] Augustine, *De sancta uirginitate* 48; CSEL 41; FC 26. Augustine makes a similar point in Sermon 181.

[25] Augustine, *Regula Sancta Augustina* 6.2 and 8.2; L. Verheijen, *Le Règle de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1967), pp. 417–437; George Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 99 and 103.

is not easily defined.[26] The reason for this is that Augustine himself operated with various definitions of sacrament at the same time. First and foremost, a sacrament for Augustine was a sign or symbol which points beyond itself to a holy reality. Sacraments not only resemble the realities they represent, but they become channels of grace by which the sacred signified truth becomes a part of the lives of the believer; and therefore participate in the reality they reflect.[27] Words, actions, and objects can be sacraments, so long as they point to a sacred reality such as salvation. Augustine assumed that since this is true, the word sacrament may be understood both in a broad and narrow sense.

Broadly speaking, Augustine argued that there are numerous sacraments in the Old and New Testaments, the life of the church, and even in other religions. Sacraments of the Old Testament (e.g., the Sabbath, circumcision, sacrifices, ceremonies, the temple, altars, feasts, the priesthood, anointing, observations with food, etc.…) were used by the Jews at one time in order to increase fidelity to God. Finally, they existed only temporarily because they became restrictive and a yoke of laws and servitude. Augustine's allegorical interpretation of scripture allowed nearly every part of the Old Testament to be representative of some New Testament reality, i.e., sacramental.

Similarly, Augustine's allegorical interpretation of the New Testament allowed nearly every word, event, or object therein to be a representation of some heavenly reality (e.g., Easter, miracles, anointing, the cross, laying on of hands, feasts, Amens, Alleluias, etc.…). With regard to the life of the church Augustine called various rites (salt on lips, exorcisms, contemplation, the penitential garment, the bowing of one's head, the taking off of one's shoes, the handing over of the *symbolum*, the entry into the catechumenate, the laying on of hands, reconciliation, great feasts and fasts, spiritual songs, etc.…) sacraments as well. Other religions, like the ones practiced by some Greeks and Romans, also had sacraments, but for Augustine they had no useful purpose since they led people away from God.[28]

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[26] When researching Augustine's view of the sacraments, one notices immediately that a recent comprehensive work on the subject is lacking. Secondary literature on this topic from the 1970's is scarce. Most secondary sources tend to repeat the opinions stated by Frederic van der Meer in *Augustinus der Seelsorger: Leben und Wirken des eines Kirchenvaters* (Köln, 1951), in English G. Battershaw and G. R. Lamb translators, *Augustine the Bishop* (London, 1961).

[27] Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 2.1.1; *Epistola* 138.7; *De Civitate Dei* 10.5.

[28] Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, pp. 280ff.; William A. Van Roo, *The Christian Sacrament* (Rome, 1992), pp. 38ff.

Narrowly speaking the New Testament at the same time can be said to have fewer sacraments than the Old Testament, but New Testament sacraments are greater in effectiveness and more useful, because they offer freedom. In particular, baptism, Eucharist, and extreme unction are sacraments of special note because they are distinguishable from the more broadly conceived sacraments in Augustine's writings. What sets these "visible words" apart is that in them the word is attached to a physical element in order that God might make absolutely clear the grace bestowed. Likewise, they are greater realities because they point to Christ's death and resurrection specifically.[29] Both the broadly and narrowly construed sacraments, for Augustine, bring the believer into a closer relationship with God and the entire Christian community.

Augustine, however, did not define his notion of sacrament as clearly as modern scholars would like. For example, Augustine compared *sacramentum* to a wide range of concepts—figures (*figura*), allegory (*allegoria*), prophecy (*prophetia*), veils (*velamen*), and symbols (*symbolum*)[30]—and so Augustine's works ultimately remain somewhat ambiguous on this subject.

Augustine considered the LP a sacrament mostly, but not entirely, in the broadest sense of the term. The LP is a sacrament in that petitioners seek forgiveness through the fifth petition and actually attain forgiveness on account of the fact that the faithful offer up of the words of Jesus. The LP is not only a sign which points to a heavenly reality, namely forgiveness, but the means by which such forgiveness is accomplished. Clearly Augustine did not understand the LP as a sacrament in the narrow sense, because there is no element connected with the word. Still, Augustine did not simply understand the LP as a sacrament in the broadest sense either, because of the LP's role in helping the believer attain not only forgiveness, but salvation as well.

If we compare the LP to the Creed (or the other broad sacraments mentioned above), we notice that the Creed is a sacrament for Augustine

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[29] Augustine, *In Evangelium Joannis Tractatus Centum Viginti Quatuor* 80.3 and *Contra Faustum Manichaeum Libri Triginta Tres* 19.13–16; *De Doctrina Christiana* 3.9.13 says, "The Lord and likewise the commands of the Apostles have, instead of handing over many, handed over only a few—the sacrament of baptism, the feast of the body and blood of the Lord; they are easy to make use of, most wonderful for those that understand them, and they are administered with great decency [*observatione castissima*]." Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, p. 280.

[30] In a text where Augustine talked about Jacob's struggle with an angel (Genesis 32) he said, "What comparison can there be of the power of an angel and that of a man? Therefore it is a mystery; therefore it is a sacrament; therefore it is a prophecy; therefore it is a figure; therefore let us understand." Sermon 122.3.3; PL 38:682.

because it reveals the nature of God to believers and in so doing brings the faithful into a closer relationship with God. But the LP's intimate connection to baptism through the fifth petition—and the idea that it is a daily baptism—sets it apart as a vehicle by which, at the very least, venial sins may be removed. The Creed mentions the forgiveness of sins, but it does not function in a way that brings about forgiveness directly. The LP does. The LP, therefore, operates somewhere between the broad and narrow definitions Augustine puts forth, in that it participates as an extension of baptism in the daily lives of individuals. As a "daily" baptism it does what baptism does not do, and that is it forgives sins over and over again. Similarly as a daily "baptism" it forgives sins in a way that the other broader sacraments do not. In other words, the LP is a sacrament unlike any other in Augustine's theology. The LP as a sacrament, for Augustine, had a transforming effect on the life of the faithful. How?

In order to answer the above question we must examine how Augustine interpreted the LP theologically. Indeed, Augustine spent a good deal of time explaining the LP in a scholarly or exegetical fashion. In this context the LP interprets, and is interpreted, by other parts of the scripture. Augustine, while still a young priest in Hippo, wrote his commentary on *The Sermon on the Mount* (c. 393–396). His motivation for writing this work had to do in part with his belief that Matthew 5–7 represented what he called "the perfect manner of Christian living."[31] He wrote this commentary to educate mature Christians, priests, and scholars (who in turn were to educate the laity) in the ways of Christian morality and truth.

The section on the LP includes a sophisticated exegetical comparison of the seven petitions of the LP, the seven beatitudes of Matthew 5, and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11. For Augustine, it was no simple mathematical coincidence that each of these three important scriptural texts had seven parts to them; for him God must have created the numerical similarities for the purpose of teaching truth. The three groups of seven, Augustine believed, ought to be carefully

[31] Augustine, *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.1; CCSL 35, p. 1; ACW 5, p. 11; cf. Augustine's *Retractiones* 1.19. In contrast to Augustine's commentary his contemporary Jerome (c. 347–419) has a brief literal commentary simply called *On Matthew* (*In Matheum*; SC 242 and 259; CCSL 77). Though brief, grounded in past interpretations of the LP, and literal in its approach to explaining the LP, Jerome's comments on the LP are frequently quoted in the future.

examined together in order to understand what lessons God intended to teach through them.

Augustine combined the three groups of seven in a creative way in order to discover and ultimately reveal what he considered to be their spiritual relationship and message. First of all, Augustine noted that the eight beatitudes of Matthew 5:3–10 are not really eight, but seven. To prove his point, Augustine pointed out that the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall inherit the kingdom of God," has the same blessing [i.e., the kingdom of heaven] as the eighth beatitude, "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Augustine concluded that since they share the same reward the first and last beatitude are therefore in fact one and the same. Hence, there are only seven beatitudes.

Augustine called the seven beatitudes maxims (*sententiae*), or degrees (*gradus*).[32] The maxims of the seven beatitudes each correspond to the sevenfold operation of the Holy Spirit of Isaiah 11:2. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, said Augustine, are meant to be understood as levels of ascending gradation, moving from the lesser gift (the fear of the Lord which is the *beginning* of wisdom) to the highest gift (wisdom itself). Isaiah 11 lists these gifts beginning with the greatest gift, wisdom, first; then it descends through the lesser gifts down to the first gift, the fear of God. Augustine reversed the order so that the gifts would line up in a proper manner with the beatitudes. These two groups then in turn were both compared side by side with the seven petitions of the LP.

The following chart illustrates how Augustine made his comparison:

Augustine's Exegetical Comparison
in his Commentary on *The Sermon on the Mount*

Gifts of Spirit Isaiah 11:2–3	*Beatitudes* Matthew 5:3–10	*LP Petitions* Matthew 6:9–13
Fear of God: *Timor Dei*	Poor in Spirit: *Pauperes Spiritu*	Holy be your name
Godliness: *Pietas*	The Meek: *Mites*	Your kingdom come
Knowledge: *Scientia*	Those who mourn: *Qui lugent*	Your will be done, on earth as in heaven

[32] Augustine, *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.3.11.

Table (*cont.*)

Gifts of Spirit Isaiah 11:2–3	*Beatitudes* Matthew 5:3–10	*LP Petitions* Matthew 6:9–13
Fortitude: *Fortitudo*	Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: *Qui esuriunt et sitiunt iustitiam*	Give us this day our daily bread
Counsel: *Consilium*	The Merciful: *Misericordes*	Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
Understanding: *Intellectus*	The Pure in Heart: *Mundicordes*	Lead us not into temptation
Wisdom: *Sapientia*	Peacemakers: *Pacifici*	But deliver us from evil.

By lining up the three groups of seven in this way, Augustine believed that he was able to explain the various aspects, or degrees, of the Christian life. For example, about the first level of comparison Augustine wrote:

> It seems to me that this number seven which attaches to these petitions corresponds to the number seven from which this whole sermon began [i.e., the beatitudes].[33] For if it is the fear of the Lord [i.e., gift of the Holy Spirit] through which the poor in spirit are blessed, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven [i.e., the beatitude], let us pray that the name of God may be hallowed [i.e., the petition of the LP] among all through holy fear enduring for ever and ever.[34]

Augustine developed a formula whereby he was able to interpret these scriptures. He noted that everyone who embodies a particular beatitude is blessed by the corresponding gift of the Spirit, so they will possess the accompanying promise of the aforementioned beatitude when they pray the corresponding petition.

The preceding thought can be said more simply: Augustine declared that people need to pray the petitions of the LP in order that they might attain the corresponding gifts of the Spirit and embody the beatitudes in their lives. Christians progress from the lowest to the highest level where finally the peacemakers (the beatitude) are blessed through wisdom (the gift of the Holy Spirit) and are called children of God (the

[33] Augustine at the beginning of this work compared the seven beatitudes and gifts of the Spirit separately. Then after proceeding straight through the Sermon on the Mount he came to the discussion of the LP and then he related his earlier comparison (found in *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.4.11) to the LP petitions.

[34] Augustine, *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 2.11.38; CCSL 35, p. 128; translation in ACW 5, pp. 125f.

promise of the beatitude). They must pray to be delivered from evil (the seventh petition of the LP) in order to cry out to God as "Abba, Father" in a spirit of adoption. Augustine firmly believed that this was attainable by all Christians while on earth.

This highest level is the one place in all of the seven comparisons where baptism, i.e., the adoption, is mentioned. The culmination of the Christian's progress toward a life of faith ends where it begins, in a close relationship with God the Father, who is made the parent of converts through baptism. Indeed, to come to the seventh or highest degree is to acknowledge the reality of the first petition and the first stage of the Christian life that God is Father and Christians are in a right relationship with God as adoptive children.[35]

The blessings that petitioners seek after in the LP pour out upon them in a limited and temporary manner as gifts and beatitudes while they are on earth, but one day they will be perfected eternally in the world to come.[36] In the case of the first level of comparison those who are poor in spirit (the beatitude) are blessed through their fear of the Lord (the gift of the Holy Spirit) because their reward will be the kingdom of heaven (the gift offered in the beatitude). For this reason, Christians ought to pray "holy be your name" (the first petition) so that God's name will be holy and honored among all here and now, even though it won't truly be holy until the day when the faithful come to heaven.

Why did Augustine compare the seven gifts, beatitudes, and petitions? Augustine used the LP most often in works that were baptismal-catechetic in nature (see chapter six in this volume). Both the LP and the gifts of the Holy Spirit played an important part within the actual rite of baptism. The baptismal rite, that Augustine was most likely familiar with, involved both an invocation of the seven gifts of the Spirit of Isaiah 11 and the praying of the LP. After the baptism, unction, and imposition of hands, a blessing was bestowed by the presiding priest, who prayed for the sevenfold gift of the Spirit to come upon those baptized. This was a request for "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, the spirit of the fear of the Lord" to descend upon those who had recently emerged from the waters of the baptismal font.[37] Therefore, the Isaiah

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[35] *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 2.10.38.

[36] *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 2.10.36.

[37] This evoking of the sevenfold Spirit, or gifts of the Spirit, was also a practice with Ambrose. See Ambrose, *De sacramentiis* 3.8; *De mysteriis* 42.

11 text was well known in the baptismal liturgy. Shortly thereafter in the baptismal rite, the LP was prayed by the initiate for the first time. Since both the LP and Isaiah 11:2 were central in the baptismal liturgy, and since there is what might be called a natural juxtaposition of these texts within the actual liturgy of baptism that Augustine was familiar with, it is not surprising that the bishop of Hippo in a similar manner would place these two groups of seven side by side.

The origin of the comparison between the seven beatitudes and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit is not quite as obvious. Very early on in his commentary on *The Sermon on the Mount* Augustine contrasts the beatitudes and gifts before he compares the three groups together.[38] Did the paralleling of the beatitudes and gifts have any logical connection like the petitions and the gifts? It appears that the LP itself is the point of contact between both of the other two groups of seven. The LP shares the biblical context of the Sermon on the Mount with the beatitudes and the baptismal context with the gifts of the Spirit. Since there is no apparent connection between the beatitudes and gifts besides the number seven, the LP is the point of comparison between the other two groups. Thus, Augustine knowing that he intended to make a threefold comparison between the beatitudes, gifts, and petitions later on in his work, contrasted the gifts and beatitudes early on in order to set up the later comparison. For Augustine, scripture interprets itself, and since all three groups share the same number and similar contexts and concepts, Augustine boldly declared, "Seven in number, therefore, are the things which lead to perfection."[39] Thus, the comparison of the three seven groups revealed for Augustine how Christians are transformed to live and the way that God brings them to salvation. The sacramental quality of the LP is crucial in aiding the faithful along the path of forgiveness, which in turn brings one closer to God through godly living.

Augustine used the LP to interpret the gifts and beatitudes and visa versa, but not until Isidore of Seville (d. 636) and Amalarius of Metz (d. 850) would others return to this same method of comparing sevens. Even Augustine never used it again. After Amalarius this numerical exegetical approach would not be employed until the twelfth century,

[38] *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.2–4.

[39] *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.3.10; CCSL 35, p. 128, "Septem sunt ergo quae perficiunt."

but after this it became more common. A few notable authors who used this type of exegesis later on are Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1142), Peter Lombard (d. 1160), Jordan of Quedlinburg (d. 1340) and Johannes Herholt (d. 1468).[40]

The LP was a sacramental prayer for Augustine, a prayer of hope and forgiveness, grace and salvation, and the very extension of baptism into the everyday lives of believers. Not only was the LP the first prayer out of the baptized believers' mouths, but it was the prayer that moved the faithful to return to the hope of a daily sacramental baptism. The mystery and wonder of the LP cannot be understated for Augustine, especially when one looks at it in light of the rest of the Bible. Its seven petitions not only sum up the truth of the scriptures, but they are intimately entwined with other sevenfold realities, such as the beatitudes and gifts of the Spirit. Therefore, the LP itself is a sacramental seed that has the ability to help the Christian life to begin germinate in the hearts of converts even before they've been baptized (for more see chapter six in this volume). Truly the mystery/sacrament[41] of the LP is worth teaching, contemplating, treasuring, and living out of all the days of one's life for Augustine. Peter Chrysologus echoes the deep respectful beauty that Augustine perceived in the LP in the following words to a group of catechumens:

> Dearly beloved, you have received the faith by hearing; now listen to the formula of the Lord's Prayer… The angels stand in awe at what you are going to hear today. Heaven marvels, earth trembles, flesh does not bear it, hearing does not grasp it, the mind does not penetrate it, all creation cannot sustain it. I do not dare to utter it, yet I cannot remain silent. May God enable you to hear and me to speak…[42]

[40] Pope Leo I (d. 461) sermons also connected the beatitudes with the petitions of the LP. However, his comparisons are brief and not nearly as thorough as Augustine's comparisons. Leo in Sermon 49 directly linked the fifth petition with the same beatitude Augustine did, namely, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." Sermon 50 also related the beatitudes, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," and "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness sake, for they will be satisfied," with the fifth petition in a way that Augustine did not.

[41] The Greek word, *mysterion*, was often translated in Latin as *sacramentum* hence the notion of sacrament and mystery in Augustine's thought were often inextricably intertwined.

[42] Peter Chyrsologus, Sermon 67:1–2; CCSL 14A, p. 402 English translation in Saint Peter Chyrsologus, *Selected Sermons* (New York, 1953), p. 115.

SECTION 2

PRAYER DURING THE FIFTH TO EIGHTH CENTURIES

CHAPTER EIGHT

PRAYER AMONG THE BENEDICTINES

Columba Stewart, O.S.B.

Introduction

The command to pray unceasingly (Luke 19:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:17) has always been central to Christian monastic life. Monastic Christians inherited the universal Christian obligation to pray at key moments of day and night, as well as practices that had become associated with those "hours" of prayer. These practices included traditional *verbal formulations* of prayer such as Psalms, readings, and the "Our Father," as well as customary *postures* such as standing, extending the arms and hands in the classic *orans* position, kneeling, and prostration. Working within and building upon this common Christian heritage, monasticism developed its own understandings and practices of prayer. A fundamental orientation towards praise of God, expressed in both liturgical and personal prayer, became the distinctive mark of monastic life within the church.[1]

To understand "prayer among the Benedictines" means exploring Benedict's legislation in both its traditional and distinctive aspects. First there is the nature of the text itself. A monastic "rule" in the sense of a comprehensive, well-organized, charter for monastic living that contains both spiritual instruction and practical prescriptions is a western invention. The concept of having a "rule of life" is older, but the precision of that norm in a specific literary genre is an innovation of the late fourth century. The oldest such text is Augustine's *Praeceptum*, ca. 397. Brief, elegantly written, and psychologically astute, this foundational document for the common life in North African communities focuses more on the challenges of community than on spiritual practices. Rather than describe itself as a *regula*, the text refers to itself instead as *hic libellus*, "this little book." Shortly thereafter, in a series of monastic

[1] See Columba Stewart, "Prayer," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christianity* (Oxford, 2008), 744–763.

organizational texts related to the island monastery of Lérins off the Mediterranean coast of southern Gaul, one begins to see the label of *regula* attached to the text itself.

As the genre evolved, so did a standard set of topics: a description of the leadership structure of the monastery; a daily schedule allowing for both prayer and work; procedures for dealing with infractions of common discipline; regulation of entry into the community. Detailed prescriptions about the communal observance of the liturgical "hours" of prayer are sometimes included as well, though such information is sketchy in the Augustinian tradition and absent in the Lérinian rules. Other writings, such as the *Institutes* of John Cassian (ca. 415) and rules dependent on the traditions of Lérins such as those of Caesarius of Arles (ca. 540) and his successor Aurelian, help reconstruct what may have been the liturgical life at Lérins. The sparse remarks about the personal prayer of monks and nuns tend to occur with reference to the prescribed daily schedule for the monastery (known as the *horarium*), though inferences about practice can be drawn from a study of terminology and correlation with liturgical data.

By the time Saint Benedict wrote his *Rule for Monks*, probably in the mid-sixth century, monasticism was well established throughout the Christian world, having passed through several generations of development. Benedict's *Rule*, intended for a monastery in central Italy,[2] shows the strong influence of earlier monastic writings and reveals a particular debt to a much longer monastic rule known as *Regula Magistri*, "Rule of the Master." Although in retrospect Benedict's *Rule* appears to be the definitive western monastic *regula*, in fact it took some centuries for it to achieve this status. The mature and sometimes quite sophisticated reception and reinterpretation of the earlier monastic tradition evident in the *Rule* made it a valuable element in so-called "mixed" rules, and it also gained ground in its integral form, especially in England and northern Germany.[3] Like other early monastic rules, Benedict's proved

[2] The standard edition is that of Adalbert de Vogüé and Jean de Neufville, *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, 6 vols., SC 181–186 (Paris, 1971). The dating and the association of the *Regula monachorum* with Monte Cassino have been challenged by Francis Clark, *The 'Gregorian' Dialogues and the Origins of Benedictine Monasticism*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, vol. 108 (Boston, 2003), who prefers to locate it in Rome at the beginning of the seventh century. While I am inclined to accept Clark's argument against Gregorian authorship of the *Dialogues*, I am less convinced by his arguments about the *Rule*.

[3] See the overview of these developments in Claude Peifer's chapter in *RB 1980:*

adaptable to female monasteries as well and is often found in feminine versions. Thus positioned, it was an obvious tool for the Carolingian monastic reform of the early ninth century, where both uniformity and tradition were important principles in the reform of monasticism within the new Frankish empire. Only then began the "Benedictine centuries" in which the *Rule* was the sole norm for religious life in the western church, a dominance that ended with the founding of the new "orders," both monastic and mendicant, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The *Rule of the Master*, Benedict's principal source, is by far the longest surviving monastic rule, containing as it does a full program for the organization of the monastery, abundant spiritual and ascetic instruction, and a highly developed liturgical code for both the customary hours and the celebration of the Eucharist.[4] The lack of success of the Master's own prolix and curiously paranoid composition (which survives in only two manuscripts) was at least partially redeemed by Benedict's careful selection of its wiser and sounder points. When interpreting Benedict's sometimes frustratingly terse directives, one can read them against the backdrop of all of his sources, particularly the *Rule of the Master*.

Benedict's monastery was a highly ordered and highly ritualized environment. Blessings and prayers accompanied even the mundane events of daily life: welcoming guests, beginning one's turn as a server at table or as reader in the refectory, leaving the monastery for a journey and returning home. Infractions against the common discipline, mistakes in performance of the liturgy, loss or damage of the monastery's property were all addressed in the context of the community gathered in the oratory for prayer. Specific instruction about prayer can be found in these parts of the *Rule*:

RB 8–19: governing the liturgical celebration of the traditional hours of prayer
RB 20: personal prayer, both within a liturgical setting and in private
RB 48: the daily schedule of reading (*lectio divina*) and work
RB 49: the observance of Lent
RB 52: the oratory of the monastery

The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes, ed. Timothy Fry et al. (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1981), "The Rule in History," pp. 113–121.

[4] Edited by Adalbert de Vogüé, *La Règle du Maître*, 3 vols., SC 105–107 (Paris, 1964). English translation by Luke Eberle, *The Rule of the Master*, Cistercian Studies 6 (Kalamazoo, 1977).

All of Benedict's teaching about prayer presumes the densely biblical culture typical of early Christian monasticism. In the Latin monastic world especially, manuscripts of the Bible were scarce and highly prized. The Bible was always read in its Latin translation, making the teaching of Latin grammar a central part of monastic education. By the time of Benedict, Jerome's version of the Latin Bible was gaining wide acceptance and Jerome, as translator of the Bible, came to be regarded by western monks as a heroic figure alongside Benedict.[5] Most of monastic prayer was in the context of hearing, reading, or chanting biblical texts. The literary universe of Benedict's monks consisted of the Bible and the commentaries upon it by Christian writers such as Origen, Rufinus, Ambrose, Augustine or Jerome. The specifically monastic literature available to them presumed the same biblical orientation and was saturated with biblical references, like the *Rule of Benedict* itself.[6] Analysis of the *Rule* suggests that 1 in 12 words is a quote from the Bible, a ratio rising to 1 in 4 for the principal chapters of spiritual instruction such as the Prologue and the Ladder of Humility (*RB* 7).[7] Benedict's monks heard the Bible read aloud at every one of the eight daily liturgical assemblies and whenever they ate (once or twice daily; see *RB* 38). They did their own reading of the Bible at scheduled periods each day (*RB* 48), and heard readings from monastic authors or the Bible in the evenings (*RB* 42). They memorized the Psalms, other biblical texts used in the liturgy, and surely much of the rest of the Bible. Such a biblically-saturated culture has been lost to the western world for centuries, even in monasteries, and is difficult for the modern reader of the *Rule* to comprehend fully. The Bible heard, reflected upon, responded to, heard again, reflected upon, and responded to: the interplay of Bible and prayer was the all-encompassing spiritual milieu of Benedictine life. Everything in the monk's life reinforced the encounter with the inescapably close biblical word.

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[5] See Bernice M. Kaczynski, "Edition, Translation and Exegesis. The Carolingians and the Bible," in *The Gentle Voices of Teachers. Aspects of Learning in the Carolingian Age*, ed. Richard E. Sullivan (Columbus, 1995), 174–181. Jerome's prefaces to each biblical book were typically copied along with the translations themselves, highlighting his association with the text of the Bible in a manner unique to Latin Christianity.

[6] Such as Latin translations of the *Life of Antony*, the *Rules* of Pachomius, Basil's *Rule*, or Rufinus' *History of the Monks of Egypt*, as well as original Latin compositions like Augustine's *Praeceptum* or Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences*.

[7] See Jean Gribomont, "La Règle et la Bible," *Atti del 7° Congresso Internazionale di Studi Sull' Alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1982), 1.355–89 and Aquinata Böckmann, "Die heilige Schrift als Quelle der RB. 'Auswahl' der Bibeltexte im Vergleich zur Magisterregel—ein Zugang zur Person Benedikts," *Regula Benedicti Studia* 18 (1994), 39–63.

A Benedictine Theology of Prayer?

The *Rule* does not contain a treatise on spirituality or mysticism, but is firmly traditional in both practice and understanding of prayer. The term "prayer" (*oratio*) itself presents a first challenge: following monastic custom, Benedict distinguishes between activities such as psalmody or *lectio divina* ("sacred reading") and "prayer."[8] In practice these were often inseparable: monastic liturgical gatherings included a pause after each psalm for silent prayer accompanied by prostration or kneeling. This ancient feature of communal monastic offices, inherited from Egypt, prescribed by Cassian (*Inst.* 2.7, 2.10) and the Master (e.g., *RM* 14.1, 33.44, 55.18) is only hinted at in the *Rule of Benedict* but was almost certainly part of the daily round of prayer.[9] Benedict speaks of the importance of keeping such personal prayer brief and focused (*RB* 20.5), alluding to Cassian's caution that too long an interval between psalms could induce sleepiness, particularly given the custom of prostrating during that time (*Inst.* 2.7.2; cf. *RM* 48.10). At the superior's signal, after perhaps a minute of silent prayer, the monks would rise and the psalmody would continue. The kneeling or prostration during this prayer added a further degree of bodily engagement in the celebration of the office, a reminder that prayer in traditional monasticism had a significant component of ritual postures and gestures.

The opportunity for personal prayer within the communal liturgy, though a precious link to the Egyptian monastic tradition, did not survive into the Middle Ages.[10] Indeed, the reticence of the *Rule* on this practice when compared to its sources, especially Cassian and the Master, may suggest the beginnings of a shift from the earlier

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[8] Thus *RB* 4:55–56: *lectiones sanctas libenter audire*, *orationi frequenter incumbere; RB* 49:4: *orationi cum fletibus, lectioni et compunctioni cordis . . . damus*.

[9] See the analysis in Vogüé, *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, 5.577–88 and 7.206–221 (the latter translated by Jean Baptist Hasbrouck, *The Rule of Saint Benedict: a Doctrinal and Spiritual Commentary*, Cistercian Studies 54 [Kalamazoo, 1983], 139–49) and underscored by him in numerous articles since. See especially "Psalmodie et prière: Remarques sur l'office de S. Benoît," *Collectanea Cisterciensiana* 44 (1982), 274–92; "Psalmodier n'est pas prier," *Ecclesia Orans* 6 (1989), 7–32; "Le psaume et l'oraison. Nouveau florilège," *Ecclesia Orans* 12 (1995), 325–49. For a counter-argument, see Aquinata Böckmann, "Gibt die *Regel Benedikts* Hinweise zum Verhältnis von Psalmodie und Stillgebet?," in *Traditio et progressio. Studi liturgici in onore del Prof. Adrien Nocent*, Studia Anselmiana 95 (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1988), 81–111. I follow Vogüé's position, noting with him that Benedict's reticence may fit into the gradual fading of the distinction between the act of psalmody and the act of prayer, and the eventual loss of the period for silent prayer.

[10] Vogüé, *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, 5.583–86.

understanding of psalmody as a sharing of sacred text that invited a response in prayer, to the medieval (and later) view that the act of singing psalms was itself prayer, not requiring any pause for silent prayer amidst the psalmody.[11]

Benedict offers no particular *liturgical* theology in the *Rule*, although he does write about the attitude appropriate to psalmody (*RB* 19; cf. *RM* 47). The oratory itself was sacred space (*RB* 52), marked particularly by its altar with relics of the saints, upon which the monks placed their written promises at monastic profession (*RB* 58.19). Although God is present at all times and in all places this is "especially and without any doubt" true at the celebration of the "Divine Work" (*RB* 19.2), where the monks were standing "in the sight of God and his angels" (*RB* 19.5). When writing thus about psalmody, Benedict is underscoring one of his favorite themes, that outward behavior should be the expression of inward disposition. Here, he urges that the mind be in concord with the voice, offering the biblical song spiritually as well as verbally (*RB* 19.7; cf. *RM* 47.20).

Benedict's teaching on prayer, *oratio*, is succinct and heavily indebted to his monastic forebears. This time, however, it is not the *Rule of the Master* to which he turns. Although the Master offers considerable evidence for the practice of *oratio* both within and beyond the liturgy, he says little about the quality of prayer. Benedict turned to John Cassian, and thus, via Cassian, to the Egyptian tradition so formative of western monastic self-understanding. The language with which Benedict describes *oratio* both directly and explicitly connects the *Rule* to Cassian's extensive treatment of monastic prayer.[12] The hallmarks of Cassian's teaching are *focus* and *intensity*, possible only in brief periods of concentrated attention.

Benedict presents his understanding of prayer in Chapter 20 of the *Rule*, following the chapter on the appropriate attitude for psalmody. The two are complementary: psalmody alternated with prayer, just as *lectio divina* was punctuated by prayer. Benedict starts off by following the Master's analogy of prayer and a request made of a powerful human being. The Master's recommendations for prayer (*RM* 48) are few and simple: do not be duplicitous, let mouth and heart be consonant, keep it brief. He then veers off into a brief recapitulation of his earlier

[11] Jeffrey, "Monastic Reading and Roman Chant," in *Western Plainchant in the First Millennium*, ed. Sean Gallagher et al. (Aldershot, Hants/Burlington, VT, 2004) p. 77.

[12] Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk* (New York, 1998), 122–129.

instructions about etiquette in the oratory (cf. *RM* 47), before concluding with an admonition that prayer in common be brief, lest monks become drowsy or distracted while prostrate, and that one pray with fear (*timor*) and with all of one's mind. Benedict completely transforms this prosaic advice. He drops the anxiety about misbehavior, and offers a series of counsels taken directly from Cassian's teaching on prayer. The key words are purity, compunction and tears. In Cassian's monastic theology, the words *purus* and *puritas* evoke his fundamental teaching on purity of heart, with its natural link to contemplation.[13] Applied to prayer, they allude to Evagrius Ponticus' doctrine of "true" or "pure" prayer, a state beyond all images and even words.[14] "Pure prayer" is focused, undistracted, a moment of simple reaching toward God. For Cassian, such prayer could be one of the classic types mentioned in 1 Timothy 2:1 and expounded by many of the early Christian writers: "supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings." Or, as Cassian notes, all four types could be gathered into one comprehensive prayer, or be transcended in a wordless ecstasy of heart that he called "fiery prayer." Although Benedict does not refer to such extraordinary experiences in prayer, his use of the Cassianic vocabulary is highly suggestive. Within the space of a few lines, he refers to prayer "with pure devotion" (*RB* 20.2), prayer in "purity of heart" (*RB* 20.3), and "pure prayer" (*RB* 20.4). None of these formulations is typical of the Master,[15] but all are central to Cassian's teaching.[16]

Benedict's references to tears and compunction link his teaching on prayer to Cassian's phenomenology of spiritual experience. All of Benedict's references to personal prayer mention tears (*RB* 4.57, 20.3, 49.4, 52.4). Only one of these passages is found also in the *Rule of the Master* (*RB* 4.57 = *RM* 3.63, "daily confess your past sins to God in prayer with tears and sighs").[17] Benedict twice links prayer to compunction

[13] Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 42–60.

[14] Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 106–107.

[15] The Master uses "pure prayer" (*oratio pura*) for prayers made at certain times during penitential seasons but without a preceding psalm (*RM* 45.5, 51.1, 52.6, 53.50), and refers to purity of heart only as a descriptor of those perfect monks able to observe the full rule of silence (*RM* 9.41).

[16] "Purity of heart" (*puritas cordis*) is Cassian's way of describing the defining characteristic of the advanced monk, in exact analogy to Evagrius' more controversial term *apatheia* (Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 40–47).

[17] The Master's only other references to tears involve the community praying with tears for a wayward brother, and the brother himself imploring forgiveness with tears: *RM* 14.25, 14.33, 14.67.

(*conpunctio: RB* 20.3, 49.4), with the sense of sorrow for one's sinfulness; the Master never uses the word. Cassian employed *conpunctio* as his generic term for intense spiritual experience, whether joyful or sorrowful, playing off of the literal meaning of the word with its suggestion of physical sensation (*Conf.* 9.26–27).[18] His description of the various forms of compunction leads into an analysis of spiritual tears (*Conf.* 9.28–30), which would be of great importance for Gregory the Great and, through him, for Latin spirituality in the Middle Ages. Benedict places himself in this tradition. The Master, despite his reliance on Cassian for teaching on obedience and other monastic themes, shows little interest in the phenomenology or spirituality of prayer.

The inclusion of silent, individual prayer within the communal sharing of the Word of God of the liturgy of the hours echoed the other major spiritual practice of Benedict's monastery, *lectio divina*. The *Rule* sets aside considerable blocks of time—depending on the season, from 1½ to 3½ hours a day—for reading the Bible and related works, such as commentaries (*RB* 48–49).[19] The exercise was obligatory, and one or two monks were deputed to make the rounds of the monastery to ensure that the brothers were actually doing their spiritual reading. The meals were accompanied by reading (*RB* 38), and the monks also had communal reading in the evenings (*RB* 42). That final reading period of the day featured monastic writings as well as the Bible, though Benedict cautions against reading the racier portions of the Old Testament so close to bedtime (*RB* 42.4).

Although reading was the principal individual spiritual activity of Benedict's monks, he provides little indication of how they were to use their time for *lectio*. We know that reading at that time was always vocalized, if not actually audible. Benedict notes that a monk who chooses to "read to himself" in the dormitory during siesta time should take care not to disturb others (*RB* 48.5). Therefore, even solitary reading was much closer to the communal experience of hearing the Word read in the liturgy or at table than is the case with private reading today. Such vocalized reading also supported the memorization of Scripture, which, like the pause for silent prayer following each psalm of the office, was a practice of Egyptian monastic origin.[20] Monks committed great

[18] Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 122–129.

[19] The calculation of 1½ to 3½ hours is based on a conversion to modern hours of fixed length from Benedict's Roman system of timekeeping with its hours of variable length based on the seasonal proportion of daylight to darkness.

[20] See Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 100–104.

portions of the Bible to memory, both for liturgical use (*RB* 8.3, 10.2, 13.11) and for private devotion. These texts, learned through repetition and continually available for reflection, were the nourishment for personal prayer. Benedict refers to the traditional monastic practice of *meditatio*, a slow repetition of a text either from memory or for the purpose of committing it to memory (*RB* 8.3; cf. 48.23, 58.5). Only many centuries later would "meditation" lose its original connection to study and repetition of biblical texts.

Finally, there are hints in the *Rule* of a particular kind of *meditatio*, the repetition of a very brief biblical text as a means to focus the wandering mind and maintain a prayerful state. Cassian concludes his lengthy discussion of methods of prayer with the recommendation of a particular text from Psalm 69(70):2, "God, come to my assistance; Lord, make haste to help me."[21] For Cassian, the repetition of the verse does not replace other *meditatio* or forms of prayer, but complements and connects them. He writes particularly of the way that the constant praying of a single verse from the Psalms fosters intimacy with the rest of the Bible (*Conf.* 10.11). Benedict's use of the same verse to begin the day hours of the Divine Office (*RB* 17.3, 18.1) may be an allusion to Cassian's recommendation, as well a means of linking personal *meditatio* to the communal sharing of the Word in the liturgy. In Benedict's chapter on humility, the longest chapter of the *Rule* and the most profound exposition of his monastic spirituality, he characterizes the first "Step of Humility" as requiring that the monk be ever mindful of everything God has commanded, always "turning over in his mind" the ultimate stakes of life and death (*RB* 7.11). Throughout the chapter, he develops this theme with key verses of the Bible that the monk is urged to repeat in particular situations, especially to find meaning in difficulty and distress. Almost all of the recommended texts are from the Psalms.[22] Finally, in the twelfth and last Step of Humility, the monk is "constantly to say in his heart" the publican's prayer from Luke's Gospel, "Lord, I am a sinner, not worthy to lift up my eyes to heaven" (Luke 18:13 as in *RB* 7.65). This, of course, is the biblical inspiration for the well-known "Jesus Prayer" of Byzantine monasticism, the most widely used example of a brief, biblically rooted, formula for prayer.

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[21] See Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 110–113.

[22] *RB* 7.18 (1st Step of Humility): Ps. 17(18):24; 7.38–39 (4th Step): Rom. 8:36+ Ps. 43(44):22 and Rom 8.37; 7.50 (6th Step): Ps. 72(73):22–23; 7.52–54 (7th Step): Ps. 21(22):7, 87(88):16, 118(119):71,73.

Liturgy

The Work of God

By far the largest body of material in the *Rule* related to prayer is in the series of chapters on the communal prayer of the liturgical hours.[23] Benedict's favorite designation for these services of psalms and readings that provided the fundamental structure for monastic night and day was "the Work of God" (*opus dei: RB* 7.63, 22.6, 43–44 *passim*, 50.3, 52.2 and 5, 58.7, 67.2–3). He also referred to these as the "divine work" (*opus divinum: RB* 16T, 19.2) and the "divine office" (*officium divinum: RB* 8T, 43.1). The preference for "Work of God" establishes the priority of *this* work over all the other tasks of the monastic life. Surprisingly, Benedict refers to the Work of God as "prayer" only once (*RB* 17.5). Benedict's extensive and highly detailed description of the liturgical life of the monastery makes no reference to celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharistic practice of Benedict's monastery must be inferred from various other allusions in the *Rule*; these will be considered in detail later.

Benedict's monks gathered for the Work of God eight times in each 24-hour period. Benedict innovates with respect to the Master by placing his series of chapters on the Work of God immediately following the chapters on the foundational principles of the cenobitic monastic life. This unusual departure from the Master's sequence of topics begs some explanation, which can only be the importance Benedict places on the celebration of these daily times of prayer, expressed in a dictum he borrows from one of the Lérinian rules, "prefer nothing to the Work of God" (*RB* 43.3, from the *Second Rule of the Fathers*). Three of these eight times of communal prayer stand out: Vigils during the night, Matins at dawn, and Vespers at sunset. Keeping nocturnal vigil was an ancient Christian practice and a prized element of monastic tradition. Matins and Vespers were commonly also celebrated in parish churches and

[23] For a good overview of this complex material, see Nathan Mitchell, "The Liturgical Code in the Rule of Benedict," in *RB 1980*, 379–414, and Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, rev. ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1993), 130–40. The most convenient detailed analysis is that of Adalbert de Vogüé in *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, vol. 5 (SC 185), 383–588, with frequent comparison to the *RM*. On the *RM* itself, see Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, 122–30, and Joseph Dyer, "Observations on the Divine Office in the Rule of the Master," in *The Divine Office in the Latin Middle Ages: methodology and source studies, regional developments, hagiography: written in honor of Professor Ruth Steiner*, ed. Margot E. Fassler and Rebecca A. Baltzer (New York, 2000), 74–98.

cathedrals. By Benedict's time, monastic and general Christian liturgical practices (the latter often called "cathedral tradition" by modern liturgists) had cross-fertilized, and Benedict's liturgy typifies the western form of the synthesis of the two traditions.[24] These three offices created the anchor points of the daily cycle of monastic prayer, marking night, daybreak, and sunset with significant liturgical celebrations.

The provisions for the Work of God show the development of the monastic hours of prayer from the simpler arrangements characteristic of the Egyptian monasteries of the fourth century, as well as a deliberate moderation of the heavier burden of psalmody found in contemporary monastic legislation. Benedict's particular concerns are two: the timing of the various offices throughout the year, and the distribution of psalms for the eight daily offices throughout the week.

Benedict's sensitivity to *natural seasons* is evident in adjustment of the liturgical schedule to suit the long nights of winter and the considerably shorter nights of summer. As noted earlier, Benedict varies the interval between Vigils and Matins (lengthy in winter, very brief in summer) and abbreviates Vigils in the short nights of summertime. His attentiveness to *both natural and liturgical seasons* shows in the careful synchronization of the times for the Work of God with the schedule for meals, which were regulated by the cycle of ecclesiastical feasts and fasts. Throughout the year, Benedict maintained an interval of 10–11 hours between rising for Vigils and the main meal of the day, with a longer fast during Lent and on the traditional penitential days of Wednesday and Friday (*RB* 41).

The Benedictine liturgical day began sometime after midnight, typically around 2:00 A.M., with Vigils, a lengthy service of psalms and readings. Such practice of nocturnal prayer, understood as a way to keep watch for the coming of the Lord, was of venerable Christian lineage. Keeping vigil in the night was standard monastic discipline, and came to be formalized among cenobites in offices that consisted mostly of psalms and readings. A special vigil office for Sunday often began the monastic week, patterned after the observance of the Christians of Jerusalem as recorded by the fourth century pilgrim, Egeria. At Jerusalem a communal vigil was held in the courtyard of the Church of the

[24] This is especially evident in the structure of the dawn office of Matins and its relationship with Vigils. On this complex problem, see Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, 191–209.

Resurrection until the doors were opened at "first cockcrow." The vigil consisted of "hymns, antiphons and prayers." Once inside the church the vigil continued with three psalms and a reading from the Gospel by the bishop. All of this was concluded before daybreak.[25] In some monastic versions, these vigils extended through the entire night, from sunset to sunrise; in others they consisted of a few hours in the latter part of the night, as in the Jerusalem practice noted by Egeria.[26]

Benedict's prescriptions for nocturnal communal prayer were shaped by monastic tradition and local practice, especially in Roman monasteries. While the *Rule of the Master* prescribes both a daily office called "Nocturns" (RM 33, 44–45) and an all-night service of psalms and readings before Sunday, which he called "Vigils" (*RM* 49), Benedict transferred the designation of "Vigils" to his *daily* night office. On weekdays this consisted of 12 psalms and included three substantial readings after the first set of six psalms. The Master had such long readings only at his all-night vigil for Sunday (*RM* 44.9, 49.2). Benedict seems to have followed Roman monastic practice in abandoning the all-night vigil.[27] However, he honors the ancient tradition by having his monks rise earlier on Sundays to celebrate a longer office of Vigils, adding to the weekday arrangement a set of four biblical canticles, additional readings, and a proclamation of the Gospel (*RB* 11.5–10). This last feature clearly echoed the Jerusalem weekly vigil of the Resurrection that had become so popular throughout the Christian world.

At dawn, the monks celebrated the office of "Matins," so-called from the Latin word for morning (the office usually referred to by later tradition as "Lauds," from the opening words of Psalms 148–50, its most distinctive feature). This was a substantial service composed of four psalms, an Old Testament canticle, Psalms 148–150, a brief reading, a hymn, a Gospel Canticle (presumably the *Benedictus*, Luke 1.68–79), litany and *Our Father* (*RB* 12–13). In winter, there was a lengthy interval between Vigils and Matins, to be devoted to prayer and reading (*RB* 8.3). In summer, the interval was brief, as Benedict prudently arranged the schedule to allow his monks sufficient sleep during the shorter nights of summer (*RB* 8; he also abbreviated the readings of summer Vigils, *RB* 10.2). The first, third, sixth, and ninth hours of daylight

[25] See Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, 51–55.
[26] See Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, 165–90.
[27] Vogüé, *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, 5.462–63.

were marked by briefer offices consisting of a hymn, three psalms, and a short reading. Vespers, so-called from the Latin for "evening," followed at nightfall. Vespers mirrored Matins, with four psalms, a brief reading, a hymn, a Gospel canticle (presumably the *Magnificat*, Luke 1:46–55), litany, and *Our Father*. A brief service, "Compline" (from the Latin *completorius*, "fulfillment" or "ending"), was celebrated just before retiring to bed.

Each of these eight offices of prayer consisted mostly of psalms (with some other biblical "canticles" included). From the very beginnings of the monastic movement, monks were expected to memorize the entire Psalter and to use it as fundamental nourishment for their spiritual lives.[28] Monastically oriented treatises on psalmody by Athanasius, great bishop of Alexandria, and John Cassian testify to the central importance of psalmody not simply as ascetic practice but as the privileged means of discovering and expressing the inner workings of one's own soul.[29] The monastic emphasis on the Psalms influenced the liturgical practice of the larger Church, contributing to a "psalmodic movement" that strengthened the role of psalmody in general liturgical practice.[30] In the Latin west, the Psalter became the foundation of Christian, and certainly monastic, education in the Middle Ages.[31]

Benedict is the first western monastic legislator to mention the use of hymnody in the liturgical hours. Each of the eight offices featured a hymn, either before or after the psalmody. Benedict's use of the term *Ambrosianum* for at least some of these hymns (*RB* 9.4, 12.4, 13.11, 17.8)

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[28] See James McKinnon, "Desert Monasticism and the Later Fourth-Century Psalmodic Movement," *Music and Letters* 75 (1994), 505–21; Joseph Dyer, "The Psalms in Monastic Prayer," in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy Van Deusen (Albany, 1999), 59–89 and "The Desert, the City and Psalmody in the Late Fourth Century," in *Western Plainchant in the First Millennium*, ed. Sean Gallagher et al. (Aldershot, Hants/Burlington, VT, 2004), 11–43; Jeffrey, "Monastic Reading and Roman Chant," 45–103; Luke Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus* (Oxford, 2005), 48–61.

[29] Athanasius' *Letter to Marcellinus* refers to an "old man" (*gerōn*, *PG* 27:12 A), a common synonym for "monk" in the Egyptian tradition, as the source for its teaching that the Psalms are a mirror for the emotions (*PG* 27.24BC). Cassian's *Conferences* 10 on unceasing prayer contains a section on psalmody that echoes Athanasius' instructions and would have been quite familiar to Benedict (*Conf.* 10.11).

[30] James McKinnon introduced this concept in his seminal articles "Desert Monasticism and the Later Fourth-Century Psalmodic Movement" and "The Desert, the City and Psalmody in the Late Fourth Century."

[31] A development traced by Jeffrey, "Monastic Reading and Roman Chant," 45–103.

indicates that the hymnody was not an innovation: as compositions of the venerated bishop Ambrose of Milan (ca. 339–397), they were already in circulation.[32] Even with the inclusion of such original material, the Benedictine Divine Office, like its Roman counterpart, never suffered the encroachment by poetic texts that eventually replaced much of the biblical content of the monastic office in the eastern liturgical traditions. In this respect, western monasticism preserved the biblical purity of the earliest monastic tradition.[33] Even as other elements were added to Benedictine liturgy in the Middle Ages (the recitation of the Penitential or Gradual Psalms, special litanies, "Little Offices" that duplicated the format of the Hours of prayer in much abbreviated form, various devotional commemorations), they were largely biblical in content.

Benedict clearly loved the Psalms, which are the most frequently quoted biblical texts in the *Rule*. In arranging the Work of God, he followed the Roman monastic practice of his day in adhering to a simple principle: the monks should pray the entire Psalter, all 150 Psalms, in the course of a week (*RB* 18.22–25). When compared to his monastic predecessors and many contemporaries, Benedict's decision to adopt the Roman model was a moderating move. The more typical monastic tendency was to pile on the Psalms, especially at night, cycling through them in numerical sequence without any regard for their aptness to the particular hour being celebrated. The Master, for example, made the "running Psalter" (*currens semper psalterium*), the traditional monastic practice, the overriding principle of his hours of prayer.[34] Benedict, working within his own constraint of the weekly Psalter, recognized both the monastic preference for running psalmody and the church's traditional association of particular psalms with specific times of day. Looking again to Roman monastic practice, he used running psalmody at Vigils and Vespers, excepting from the purely numerical sequence those Psalms traditionally used for Matins, the minor offices during the day, or Compline. By abbreviating Lauds and Vespers slightly, he was able to introduce running psalmody into Prime as well. The priority of psalmody over other elements of the office, a typically monastic trait, shows in the way Benedict abbreviates Vigils in summertime: lest the

[32] See Taft, *Liturgy of the Hours*, 142–143, cf. 149.

[33] See Stig Simeon Frøyshov, "La Réticence à l'hymnographie chez des anachorètes de l'Égypte et du Sinaï du 6e au 8e siècles," in *L'Hymnographie: Conférences Saint-Serge 46*, ed. A. M. Triacca (Rome, 2000), 229–45.

[34] *RM* 33.29 and 36, 35.2, 36.1, 40.2, 41.2, 44.2, 46.1.

weekly completion of the Psalter be at risk, he eliminates the long readings rather than shorten the psalmody. The resulting arrangement of the Psalms for Benedictine liturgical prayer proved remarkably durable and influential, remaining the norm for western monastic practice until the liturgical reforms following Vatican Council II.[35]

Benedict specified that only those monks with aptitude were to take turns leading the psalmody and doing the readings, thereby underscoring that the purpose of liturgical ministry was edification of the assembled community, not the exercise of some prerogative by the individual monk (*RB* 38.12). The manner of actually performing psalmody in Benedict's monastery was typical of the larger church at that time. The monks stood for the chanting of the psalms by a soloist (*RB* 47.2); they sat only for the longer readings of Vigils (*RB* 9.5, 11.2). Sometimes the community would simply listen to the psalm, but usually they responded with a refrain repeated at regular intervals throughout the psalm. This refrain was called an *antiphona* ("responding sound"). Sometimes the *antiphona* was simply "alleluia," especially on Sundays and during the Easter season. At the end of each psalm all the monks together sang the traditional Trinitarian doxology, "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit…" (*Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto*…)."[36] As Joseph Dyer has pointed out, Benedict's practice of communal listening and participating with a refrain rather than by communal singing of the whole psalm was a matter of traditional usage, not a necessity dictated by lack of books.[37] The monks certainly knew all of the Psalms: indeed, Benedict prescribes that when a monk is working at a distance from the oratory and cannot get to one of the offices, he is simply to perform the Work of God where he is (*RB* 50.3).

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[35] Benedict's arrangement was confirmed in the edition of the *Breviarium Monasticum* approved by Pope Paul V in 1612 as part of the post-Tridentine reform of the Latin liturgical tradition. There were revisions undertaken by some French Benedictine congregations in the eighteenth centuries, analogous to French diocesan revisions of the non-monastic Roman Divine Office, which rearranged and abbreviated the psalmody. These did not survive the French Revolution, though the Office of the French Congregation of Saint-Maur (itself based upon the practice of the Congregation of Saint-Vanne) was adopted by the Hungarian Benedictine Congregation and used until Vatican II.

[36] On the early monastic and later practice, see Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages," *Revue Bénédictine* 99 (1989), 41–74. On the musicological aspects of this transition, see Dyer, "The Singing of Psalms in the Early-Medieval Office," *Speculum* 64 (1989), 535–78.

[37] Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody," 69.

Only by the late eighth century, more than 200 years after Benedict, were monks and nuns chanting the Psalms in the manner familiar today, alternating between two parts of the monastic choir. With that change, the meaning of *antiphona* shifted to signify a verse repeated at the beginning and end of a psalm but not during it.

Each office included at least one reading from Scripture. Vigils had several: during the longer nights of winter (November 1–Easter), weekday Vigils had three readings, with some kind of sung response following each (*RB* 9.5–8), and there more on Sundays (*RB* 11). The other seven daily offices featured only brief passages from Scripture, recited from memory rather than "read from the book." At Matins (Lauds) these were taken from the Pauline epistles or, on Sundays, the Book of Revelation (*RB* 12.4, 13.11).

Vigils with their longer readings were the principal liturgical venue for shared listening to the Word. On weekdays, the three readings were positioned at the mid-point of the psalmody, after the first set of six psalms. They were to be read "from the book on the lectern," suggesting that they were longish selections. Readings were also to be chosen from Christian commentaries on scripture (*RB* 9.8; cf. 73.4). Benedict specifies that these were to be taken from the writings of "renowned and orthodox Catholic Fathers," who would have included authors such as Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Leo.[38] In summer these three readings were replaced by a brief memorized text from the Old Testament (*RB* 10.2). After the second set of six psalms, a brief memorized text from Paul's epistles followed in both winter and summer.

Because of their special character, Vigils on Sunday featured more readings (two sets of four, all "from the book" as on weekdays), an added set of three Old Testament canticles chanted like psalms, four readings from the New Testament (i.e., from the Epistles), and a Gospel reading by the Abbot. This longer office required the monks to rise earlier than normal; the combination of earlier rising and extended singing and reading gave Sunday Vigils something of the character of the Resurrection vigil described above. By at least the eighth century, the

[38] See Aimé Georges Martimort, *Les lectures liturgiques et leurs livres*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental 64 (Turnhout, 1992), 79, for the reminder that these patristic commentaries read during the weeknights of winter were not necessarily intercalated among the biblical readings as in later practice, but rather read as *lectio continua* once the biblical book was finished; such was the practice at Cluny in the late eleventh century.

Gospel read at Sunday Vigils was that assigned for the Sunday Mass, and patristic commentary on that particular text had replaced the four readings from the Epistles, linking the monastic Office to the universal Eucharistic liturgy.[39] Despite later efforts to return to the practice prescribed by the *Rule*,[40] this custom prevailed until Vatican Council II.

Benedict provides no details about which books were read at Vigils. Seventh and eighth century *ordines* from Roman monasteries describe rudimentary annual lectionaries that became the basis for medieval Benedictine practice in the Frankish empire: before and during Lent there were readings from the Heptateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges); for Easter, readings from the Acts of the Apostles, the Book of Revelation, and the Catholic Epistles; during summer and autumn, major historical books, Wisdom books, and Prophets; from Advent to Epiphany, the major Prophets, especially Isaiah.[41] There were also readings specific to feasts of the saints, including both biblical and hagiographical texts. These proliferated in the Middle Ages with the burgeoning cult of the saints, as every monastery or monastic congregation (family of related monasteries) observed its own liturgical calendar featuring patronal, local, or otherwise significant saints.

Practical considerations meant that biblical books could not be read completely within the office of Vigils, and medieval monastic custom was to continue the readings at meals, preserving the principle of *lectio continua* and further strengthening the traditional monastic linkage between oratory and refectory. Nor could the patristic commentaries prescribed by Benedict for weekday Vigils be accommodated within the scope of an annual biblical lectionary; these too were sometimes transferred to the refectory.[42] In later practice the length of the readings was considerably reduced, especially with the conformity of Benedictine liturgy to the model of the breviary, a book containing all texts for the Divine Office in a single volume. Created for use by Franciscan and other religious who prayed while traveling, the format of the breviary,

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[39] Martimort, *Les lectures liturgiques et leurs livres*, 88.

[40] As in the post-Tridentine breviaries of the congregations of Cluny and Saint-Vanne. See Pierre Salmon, *L'Office divin: histoire de la formation du Bréviaire* (Paris, 1959), 181–187.

[41] Pierre Salmon, *L'Office divin au Moyen Âge. Histoire de la formation du bréviaire du IXe au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1967), 136–138.

[42] Aimé-Georges Martimort, "La Lecture patristique dans la liturgie des heures," in *Traditio et Progressio.* Studi liturgici in onore del Prof. Adrien Nocent, ed. Giustino Farnedi, Studia Anselmiana 95 (Rome, 1988), 323–24.

as its name would suggest, imposed significant curtailment of the readings. The printed versions of the Benedictine Divine Office, especially from the time of the official post-Tridentine edition of the *Breviarium Monasticum* in 1612, fixed the lectionary for the biblical and non-biblical readings at Vigils until the reforms of the 1960s.

Eucharist

We know that Benedict's monastery had priests among its members, and that the monastic oratory featured an altar containing the relics of saints, suggesting that it was used at least occasionally for the celebration of the Eucharist. The inclusion of priests in the community represents an evolutionary step in Latin monasticism, which echoed the earlier Egyptian reluctance to allow ordination for monks and even for abbots (Benedict himself was not ordained). Priesthood, because of its association with parochial ministry and obedience to a bishop, was considered alien to the monastic life, which had an internal focus and its own structures of obedience and accountability. Benedict reflects the traditional view in his caution that priests in the monastery should not presume any special status, especially vis-à-vis the abbot, apart from the exercise of specific liturgical duties (*RB* 60.5–7, 62.2–11). Priests who wish to join the monastery are to be questioned closely: in a rare glimmer of irony, in his chapter on the admission of priests, Benedict quotes Jesus' question to Judas, "Friend, what have you come for?" (Matthew 26:50, *RB* 60.3). By allowing priests in the community, Benedict is more generous than the Master, who bans them entirely from membership (*RM* 83). Benedict also foresees the ordination of monks chosen by the Abbot to serve the community (*RB* 62).

The monks of the Master's monastery would attend the Sunday Eucharist at their local parish church.[43] Although Benedict is silent on the subject, it is entirely possible that his monastery, with its own priests, would have had its own celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and feasts. The rite of monastic profession presumably occurred at the Eucharist, as the altar figures in Benedict's description (*RB* 58.19–21) and one of the alternative forms of monastic profession, used for the oblation of infants, refers explicitly to the offertory rite of the Eucharistic

[43] See Eberle, *The Rule of the Master*, 31–32, and Nathan Mitchell, "The Liturgical Code in the Rule of Benedict," in *RB 1980*, 410–411.

celebration (*RB* 59.2 and 8). Daily celebration of the full Eucharistic liturgy was not typical at the time. We know that the Master envisaged daily communion from the reserved Eucharistic bread and wine (*RM* 21–22), presumably brought to the monastery after the Sunday celebration at the parish church. There are hints in Benedict's *Rule* of the same practice (*RB* 38.2 and 10, 63.4).

The role of priesthood and Eucharist in Benedictine life underwent significant development in subsequent centuries, echoing trends in Eucharistic theology and practice in the larger church. Daily celebration of the Eucharist became normative, as did the celebration of multiple Masses in larger churches and monasteries.[44] Theories of the benefits accruing from the offering of Mass for the particular intentions of a donor, especially for the release of the souls of the dead from Purgatory, fueled the liturgical and economic development of monasteries.[45] The great number of Masses required a great number of priests, and ordination eventually became the norm rather than the exception for monks able to complete the necessary studies. This development also contributed to the eventual division of male communities into two groups, ordained "choir monks" who celebrated the full round of liturgical prayer and typically devoted themselves to tasks such as copying manuscripts or other intellectual labors, and non-ordained "lay brothers" (known as *conversi*), who had a less onerous schedule of common prayer and did most of the manual labor of the monastery. Such distinctions inevitably reflected differences of social class, and were often echoed in women's monasteries as well in a distinction between choir nuns and lay sisters. This represented a clear departure from Benedict's

[44] For these developments, see Otto Nussbaum, *Kloster, Priestermönch und Privatmesse: ihr Verhältnis im Westen von den Anfängen bis zum hohen Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1961); Angelus Häussling, *Mönchskonvent und Eucharistiefeier: einer Studie über die Messe in der abendländischen Klosterliturgie des frühen Mittelalters und zur Geschichte der Messhäufigkeit*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 58 (Münster, 1973); Cyrille Vogel, "Une mutation cultuelle inexpliquée: Le passage de l'Eucharistie communautaire à la Messe privée," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses de l'Université de Strasbourg* 54 (1980), 231–250, and "La Règle de S. Benoît et le culte Chrétien. Prêtre-moine et moine-prêtre," in *Atti del 7° Congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto Medioevo: San Benedetto nel suo tempo* (Spoleto, 1982), 2:409–427.

[45] On this development, see Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *Die vielen Messen und das eine Opfer. Eine Untersuchung über die rechte Norm der Messhäufigkeit*, 2nd ed., Quaestiones disputatae 31 (Freiburg im Bresgau, 1966), English trans., *The Celebration of the Eucharist* (New York, 1968); Cyrille Vogel, "Deux conséquences de l'eschatologie grégorienne: la multiplication des messes privées et les moines-prêtres," in Jacques Fontaine et al., eds., *Grégoire le Grand* (Paris, 1986), 267–276.

model of a community in which there were to be no distinctions of rank or privilege apart from simple seniority of membership or recognition of extraordinary merit (*RB* 63).

The addition of a daily conventual celebration of the Eucharist to the monastic horarium, and the need to adjust the schedule to allow for the celebration of "private" Masses by the priests of the monastery, posed the first major challenge to Benedict's carefully constructed balance of prayer, work, and rest.[46] The theological preparation required for priesthood also raised the intellectual level in the monasteries, laying the groundwork for the famous Benedictine dedication to study, the copying of manuscripts, and the arts. Though the impact of these developments was more pronounced on male communities, whose members were eligible for ordination, the daily celebration of Eucharist became typical of female monasteries as well, supplied by chaplains who were often monks of nearby male communities.

Conclusion

Although the eventual dominance of the *Rule of Benedict* could not have been foreseen, in retrospect its wisdom is readily apparent, for the *Rule* represents a soundly traditional synthesis of early Latin monastic tradition with a sophisticated understanding of what is required to create a viable community. There are elements of the *Rule* that look forward, but it remains essentially a witness to the western appropriation and development of eastern monastic sources. As the foundation for the expansion of western European monasticism in the Middle Ages, the *Rule* came to be read and understood in a religious culture quite different from the one which produced it.

Benedict presumes more about prayer than he writes about it, and as so often is the case when studying the *Rule*, one must read beyond it to understand Benedict's teaching and intentions, and to appreciate his achievement. His ability to remain focused on the essentials of the monastic life as he constructed a framework for its communal pursuit remains impressive. His instincts were sound: to emphasize reading and listening to the Bible, especially the Psalms, and to calibrate rest,

[46] For a convenient summary of how daily celebration of Eucharist was incorporated in the Carolingian era, see M. Alfred Schroll, *Benedictine Monasticism as Reflected in the Warnefrid-Hildemar Commentaries on the Rule* (New York, 1941), 116–117.

nourishment, and manual labor in order to foster attentiveness to prayer. His few but precious allusions to the western inheritance of eastern Christian mystical traditions foreshadow developments in the medieval Latin world and exemplify the privileged place of Benedictine monasticism as a natural bridge between the traditions of Christian east and west. Despite the titanic changes in church and society since its composition almost 1500 years ago, the *Rule* remains a beacon of clarity and sanity, most of all for the simple insistence that its followers "prefer nothing to the Work of God" (*RB* 43.3).

CHAPTER NINE

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN EARLY CHRISTIAN POLEMICS TO THE EIGHTH CENTURY[1]

Roy Hammerling

The gospels of Matthew and Luke record that Jesus himself taught the Lord's Prayer (LP) to his disciples; early Christian authors relying upon these accounts believed that the prayer itself therefore was endowed with both divine mystery and power. The mystery lay in the fact that the LP succinctly summed up the essence of Christian teaching, especially that it revealed the divine mystery of how God the Judge becomes God the Father for believers through the adoption of baptism. The power of the LP resided in the belief that the prayer could produce what it asked for, namely, daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from temptation and evil.[2] Early churches gave the LP a central place in its teaching, public worship, and the private devotional life of individual

[1] The author is grateful to the members of the Society for the Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, who sponsored this paper at the International Medieval Conference at Kalamazoo Michigan of May 1998, and who provided helpful comments to improve its content. Likewise I am indebted to my colleagues in the Religion Department at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota for the same reason.

[2] For an example of a comment on power see Ambrose who declares, "Behold, how brief the (Lord's) Prayer is and how full of all power." Ambrose, *De Sacramentiis*, 5.4.18; SC 29, "Uides quam breuis oratio et omnium plena uirtutum." While there are numerous passages which illustrate the emphasis upon the mystery of the LP perhaps some of the most interesting are in Peter Chyrsologus, Sermons (see for example his Sermon 67:1–2 in CCSL 14A, p. 402 English translation in Saint Peter Chyrsologus, *Selected Sermons* (New York, 1953), p. 115. A similar passage emphasizing the mystery of the LP may be found in Peter Chyrsologus, Sermon 70; CCSL 24A, p. 420. The following translation of this Chyrsologus' passage is from *Selected Sermons*, pp. 119ff. and it is slightly altered by the author of this article, "However, at nothing does heaven stand so much astonished, or earth tremble, or all creation fear exceedingly, as at that which you are going to hear from us today (through the reciting of the LP). The servant dares to call his Lord Father, the guilty name their judge parent, people in their earthly state bring to themselves by their own voices adoption as God's children. Those who have lost earthly goods deem themselves the heirs of Divinity." Another author who delighted in the mystery of the LP was Gregory of Nyssa, cf. *Gregorii Nysseni: De Oratione Dominica, De Beatitudinibus*, Johannes F. Callahan, ed., Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992. Also see Karlfried Froehlich, "The LP in Patristic Literature," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Supplemental Vol. 2 (1992), pp. 71–87 (also in this volume).

Christians as early as the first century (cf. New Testament and *Didache*). Because of its pivotal place within Christian tradition, the earliest churches often guarded the LP from "outsiders" with jealous affection and defended the prayer against what they perceived as misguided "insiders." Ambrose at the end of the fourth century worried that the sacred treasures of the church (like the LP, the Apostle's Creed, and the Eucharist) might somehow fall into the hands of unbelievers, who were incapable of understanding the mystery and appreciating the power of the LP. He sternly warned against inadvertently casting these pearls of great price before swine (cf. Matthew 7:6).[3]

What is sometimes referred to by scholars as a *disciplina arcani* (or a "discipline of the secret") developed around the LP: at least for a time the LP came to be regarded as an "in-house" prayer intended solely for the eyes and ears of the faithful. Before the fifth century, the evidence suggests that churches taught the LP to converts primarily *after* they had been baptized in order to insure that those who knew and used it were truly faithful members of a particular church: converts intending to be baptized, however, were dismissed from worship services *before* the congregation prayed the LP and the liturgy presented the mysteries of the faith. Church educators placed the LP into the hands of the recently baptized almost immediately, because, as Cyprian noted, the LP was easy to learn due to its divine brevity (for more on this see chapter six in this volume). Likewise Cyprian noted that the LP was perfect for converts because it abounded "spiritually in power," and was a perfect "summary of heavenly doctrine!"[4]

The emphasis upon the LP as a text for teaching baptized converts in particular affected how and why early polemical authors used the LP. Essentially down to the fifth century the LP was used in polemics to promote what was considered a unity of true Christian teaching and religious practice. Polemical use of the LP at this time focused upon convincing both the faithful and so-called heretical Christian sects of the truth of a particular theological position. Essentially the debate

[3] Ambrose, *De Sacramentis* 5.18; cf. both SC 25, pp. 93ff. and CSEL 73, pars 7, pp. 65f.

[4] Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 9; CCSL 3 A, p. 94, "Qualia autem sunt, fratres dilectissimi, orationis dominicae sacramenta, quam multa, quam magna, breuiter in sermone collecta sed in uirtute spiritualiter copiosa, ut nihil omnino praetermissum sit quod non in precibus atque orationibus nostris caelestis doctrinae compendio comprehendatur!" Translation from The Fathers of the Church Series (FC) 36, p. 133.

was between Catholic, Marcion, Pelagian, Donatist, and other such variations on Christianity.

While polemical arguments using the LP were first directed at those who were considered divergent from a particular Christian tradition, such polemics also at times focused on Jewish teachings as well in order to suggest how Christianity was different from and even superior to Judaism. However, this debate was basically an in-house discussion. In other words, the texts using the LP to refute Judaism were not meant to be read by Jews, but other Christians. Also, a few scholars appealed to the LP in somewhat veiled way to suggest the truth of Christianity over and against what was called "pagan" religions, namely non-Christian and non-Judaic traditions and beliefs. In particular from the sixth to the tenth centuries the apologetic use of the LP was employed almost exclusively as a polemical tool to refute non-Christian teachings and religious practices that survived within Christianity even after people had been baptized and instructed in their new faith. As Christianity spread across Europe the LP was considered to be the perfect prayer to counter and replace what was considered non-Christian religious prayerful practices and beliefs.

Throughout the centuries the LP was considered an effective tool in the polemicists arsenal. From the point of view of early Christians, no matter what type of Christian one was, the divine power and mystery of the LP pointed believers toward true Christian beliefs and practices in a way that excluded those who might be considered to hold non-Christian views. Therefore, various churches believed that the wayward insider and the misguided outsider might be made to return or turn to the truth of Christian faith and practice if they could only be persuaded by the power of the words of the churches most sacred prayer and the mystery of its wondrous teachings. This article explores how these polemical uses of the LP developed from the first to the tenth centuries.

The Lord's Prayer as an Apology for True Teaching and Practice

Irenaeus (c. 130–200) arguing against the so-called Gnostics (in his *Against the Heresies, Adversus Haereses*) was the first author to utilize the LP in a polemical way. Shortly thereafter Tertullian also quoted the LP in his treatise *Against Marcion* (written c. 207–212). Both authors

refuted Gnostic and Marcionite dualistic views of God by appealing to the LP. The words "Our Father", Irenaeus noted, suggest that God does not remain distant from a wicked creation, but that God enters into a familial relationship with it and humanity.[5] Put simply Tertullian found the Marcionite notion of God to be utter nonsense. Which God are the Marcionites praying to in the LP, wondered Tertullian? Is it to the good Spirit God who has nothing to do with creation, or the wicked creator God who made the world and so-called evil flesh. For Irenaeus and Tertullian, the two straightforward words "Our Father" provided sufficient theological evidence to expose the dualistic errors of their opponents.[6] Note that there is an assumption here that their opponents are praying the LP and that it was a part of their system of belief and practice and therefore the LP is an appropriate common ground upon which the polemicists might refute the errors of their opponents. Indeed, the basic tenants of the dualists' beliefs for Irenaeus and Tertullian are completely undermined by the wondrous lessons of the simple wisdom of the LP.

Augustine quoted the LP more extensively than any other early apologist when he vigorously fought against the doctrinal teachings of the Pelagians (and scholarly named Semi-Pelagians), and the idea that salvation was possible through good works apart from God's grace. Augustine stressed that the LP clearly reveals that all people are sinful and need God's forgiveness: it is simply impossible to be saved by good works alone. Augustine states (in his work entitled *On Nature and Grace, De Natura et Gratia*, c. 413–415), "Here, indeed, [in the fifth petition of the LP] we have the daily incense, so to speak, of the Spirit which is offered on the altar of the heart, which we are bidden to lift up implying that even if we cannot live here without sin, we may yet die without sin, when in merciful forgiveness the sin is blotted out which is committed in ignorance and infirmity."[7] So convinced was Augustine

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[5] *Adversus Haereses* 4.9 and *Adversus Haereses* 5.17.

[6] Ernest Evans, *Adversus Marcionem* (Oxford, 1972) and SC 365, 368, 399 are only books 1–3. Translation in the Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF) 3, p. 369.

[7] Augustine, *De Natura et Gratia* 1.35.41; PL 44:267, "Per hoc enim quotidianum spirituale quodam modo incensum, quod ante Deum in altare cordis, quod sursum habere admonemur, infertur, etiamsi non hic vivatur sine peccato, licet mori sine peccato, dum subinde venia deletur, quod subinde ignorantia vel infirmitate committitur." Translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Philip Schaff ed., vol. 5, (Grand Rapids, MI, 1956), p. 135. Also, for other references concerning the fifth petition in works dealing with the Pelagian heresy see Augustine's comments in *De Natura et Gratia* 1.35.41, 1.60.70, 1.67.80f.; *De Peccatorum meritis et remissione* 2.4, 2.21, 2.25, and 3.25 along with

of the centrality of the LP for his argument against the Pelagians that he would even at one point declare, "Therefore, if there were no other proofs, this, the Lord's Prayer alone would suffice for us respecting the cause of grace which we are defending…"[8]

Augustine not only believed that it is impossible to be saved without God's grace, but it was also impossible to persevere in the faith without grace.[9] In particular Augustine on this point draws upon the sixth petition of the LP, "Lead us not into temptation" in order to show that believers need divine aid in order to be kept from temptation, which can lead to sin, in this case belief in false doctrines. Augustine (in his *On the Perfection of Human Justice, De perfectione iustitiae hominis*, c. 415–416) states that "…if anyone says that we ought not to use the prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation' (and he says as much who maintains that God's help is unnecessary to a person for the avoidance of sin, and that human will, after accepting only the law, is sufficient for the purpose), then I do not hesitate at once to affirm that such a person ought to be removed from the public ear, and to be anathematized by every mouth."[10] God removes the stain of sin from believers, and one of the means by which God does this is the fifth petition of the LP and through the sixth

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his comments on the same work in his *Retractiones*, 2.23; *De spiritu et littera* 65; *De perfectione iustitae hominis* 6, 11, 15, 21: *De Gestis Pelagii* 27, 55: *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* 1.38; *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* 1.27, 2.5, 3.23, 4.17; *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* 26; *De correptione et Gratia* 35; and *De Dono Perseverantiae* 5.

[8] Augustine *De dono perseverantiae* 7.13; PL 45:1001, "Si ergo alia documenta non essent, haec dominica oratio nobis ad causam gratiae quam defendimus sola sufficeret, quia nihil nobis reliquit, in quo tamquam in nostro gloriemur, siquidem et ut non discedamus a Deo, non ostendit dandum esse nisi a Deo cum poscendum ostendit a Deo." Lesousky, *The Dono Perseverantiae*, pp. 122f. See also *On the Predestination of the Saints* (*De praedestinatione sanctorum*, c. 428–429); *On Grace and Free Will* (*De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*); and *On Correction and Grace* (*De Correptione et Gratia*).

[9] Cf. Augustine, *On the Gift of Perseverance, De dono perseverantiae*, written c. 428–429.

[10] Augustine, *De perfectione iustitae hominis*, 21.44; PL 44:317f., "Sed plane quisquis negat, nos orare debere, ne intremus in tentationem (negat autem hoc qui contendit ad non peccandum gratiae Dei adjutorium non esse homini necessarium, sed sola legere accepta humanam sufficere voluntatem); ab auribus omnium removendum, et ore omnium anathemandum esse noa dubito." Translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5, p. 176. For other works that deal with Augustine's discussion of the sixth petition in light of the Pelagian heresy see *De perfectione iustitae hominis* 10, 19, 20, 21; *De Peccatorum meritis et remissione* 2.2 and 2.4; *De Natura et Gratia* 1.53.62, 1.59.69, 1.67.80; *De Gestis Pelagii* 20; *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* 1.27; *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* 26; and *De Dono Perseverantiae* 5.9, 6.11, 6.12, 7.15, 17.46, 21.56, 22.62, and 23.63. For a work which uses the sixth petition against the Manichean heresy see *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 2.9.30–35.

petition which helps prevent further stain from soiling the lives of the faithful.[11] Indeed, said Augustine, in the LP "almost nothing else other than perseverance is understood to be asked for."[12]

Ireneaus, Tertullian, and Augustine demonstrate how the teachings of the LP were central in refuting the key elements of faith practices and belief systems in various early Christian sects. Perhaps they in turn were attacked by similar arguments of their opponents, who probably used the LP to defend their views, but unfortunately much of their writing has not come down to us.

Other authors considered to be "orthodox" also argued that even the use of the LP in worship not only undermined the teachings of schismatic groups, but also invalidated their wayward Christian practices of praying the LP in worship, and even privately. Most, if not all, early Christian groups, who were considered theologically suspect, appear to have utilized some version of the LP in worship and private prayer. Tertullian, for example, surprisingly reveals that the Marcionites version of the LP began with the words, "Father, let your Spirit come and cleanse us" instead of the traditional words, "Our Father in heaven, holy be your name."[13] An in-depth glance at this passage reveals that

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[11] Augustine, *De Natura et Gratia* 80; PL 44:287, "Duobus enim modis etiam in corpore cavetur morbi malum; et ut non accidat, et ut si acciderit, cito sanetur: ut non accidat, caveamus dicendo, Ne nos inferas in tentationem; ut cito sanetur, caveamus dicendo, Dimitte nobis debita nostra. Sine ergo immineat, sive insit, caveri potest." Translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5, p. 149. For a similar passage in Augustine see *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* 26.

[12] Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae* 2.3; PL 45:996, "…nihil paene aliud quam perseverantia posci intelligatur." Lesousky, *The Dono Perseverantiae*, pp. 108f. For Augustine, six of the seven petitions specifically asked for the grace of perseverance. Augustine declared, "In (the fifth) petition alone perseverance is not asked for, for past are the sins which we ask to be forgiven us; for although perseverance which gives us salvation for eternity is certainly necessary for the period of this life, yet not for the time already past, but for that which remains even unto the end." Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae* 5.8; PL 45:998, "In qua sola petitione non invenitur posci perseverantia, praeterita enim sunt peccata quae nobis ut dimittantur oramus; perseverantia vero, quae in aeternum salvos facit, tempori quidem huius vitae, non tamen peracto, sed ei quod usque ad eius finem restat, est necessaria." Lesousky, *The Dono Perseverantiae*, pp. 114f.

For others who make this same argument see Prosper of Aquitaine, *Pro Augustino responsiones, De gratia Dei et libero voluntatis arbitrio contra collatorem*, PL 45 and 51 (esp. PL 51:185); ACW 32.

[13] Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* IV.26; SC 365 (Book 1), SC 368 (Book 2), and SC 399 (Book 3); E. P. Meijering, *Tertullian Contra Marcion: Gotteslehre in der Polemik: Adversus Marcionem I–II* (Leiden, 1977); Latin and English in Ernest Evans, *Adversus Marcionem*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1972); and ANF 3, pp. 288ff.

Tertullian surprisingly does not even argue that the variant version of the LP is a problem. Rather he accepts the wording as it stands and uses it to undermine the dualist tendency of the Marcionites.[14] In the end, therefore, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and others appealed to the LP in polemical arguments in part because it was a common ground over which the two sides could meet to do theological battle, but also because the proper use of the LP was perhaps a mark of the efficacy of the "correct" faith tradition and beliefs.

Optatus of Milevis found the very practice of praying the LP properly helpful in his attacks upon the Donatists (in his *Concerning the Schism of the Donatists, De Schismate Donatistarum*, written c. 360–380).[15] The Donatists, Optatus argued, believed that their priests needed to be blameless in order for the sacraments that they administered to be efficacious. If in fact the Donatist priests are holy, declared Optatus, then they have no sins which need remittance and the LP does not pertain to them. But Optatus wondered, why the Donatist priests prayed the words of the LP, "Forgive us our trespasses," if they have no trespasses that need forgiving? Optatus concluded that since Donatist clergy pray the LP in worship their basic theological beliefs are completely confounded if one thinks about it closely.[16]

Jerome takes an approach similar to Optatus in his *Dialogue Against the Pelagians* (*Dialogus adversus Pelagianos*, c. 417). For Jerome, the place of the LP in the worship service is what condemns Pelagian doctrines. The ancient liturgies placed the LP after baptism and/or before the Eucharist. Jerome argued that all Christians are sinners and therefore need the forgiveness offered by God through the LP before they receive the Lord's Supper, i.e., if they are to receive it properly. If the Pelagian view is correct, then they do not need the LP at all since they are blameless.[17]

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[14] Tertullian asked the Marcionites, "To whom can I say, 'Father'? To him who had nothing to do with making me, from whom I do not derive my origin? Or to Him, who by making and fashioning me, became my parent? Of whom can I ask for His Holy Spirit? Of him who gives not the mundane spirit; and whose Spirit it was which in the beginning hovered upon the waters." Cf. Ernest Evans, *Adversus Marcionem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972) and SC 365, 368, 399 are only books 1–3. Translation in ANF 3, p. 369.

[15] *De schismate Donatistarum*, a.k.a. *Adversus Parmenianum Donatistam.*

[16] Optatus, *De schismate Donatistarum* 2:20–21, 3:9–10; and 7:1–2 in CSEL 26, pp. 53ff., 92ff., and 158ff.

[17] Jerome, *Dialogus adversus Pelagianos* 3.15; PL 23:585, "Sic docuit Apostolos suos, ut quotidie in corporis illius sacrificio credentes audeant loqui: *Pater Noster*…" Translation in FC 53, p. 371.

The fact that the LP was also prayed by converts for the first time immediately after they were baptized was even more significant for Jerome. He wondered, "Is anyone more perfect or clean than the person who emerges from the waters of baptism?" Jerome's answer, "Of course not." Then why, wondered Jerome, are the first words out of the converts watery baptized mouth the LP? The Pelagians had argued that the LP is recited after baptism as a sign of the humility of the believer. But Jerome believed that despite the recent washing away of sins in baptism, the newly baptized nevertheless prayed the LP, and especially the fifth petition about forgiveness, out of a real need for God's grace.[18]

The above comments suggest why early apologists believed that the LP was an important common ground upon which various Christian groups could do verbal battle. Both sides used the LP in worship and private devotions and therefore were not only familiar with it, but turned to the LP to support their own brand of theological convictions. At times ordinary in-the-street Christians of that day and age may have had a difficult time telling the various groups apart. What distinguished them, however, was their particular doctrinal views, and often this was most clear in regard to how various traditions used the LP in practice (especially in worship) and how their teachings and practices with regard to the LP related to one another. If a sect could be shown to be misusing or misinterpreting the LP, they then were misrepresenting the divine words of Jesus and ultimately the truth of Christianity. If apologists could discredit their foes' use of the LP, then the apologist effectively demonstrated that the worship, private devotions, teaching, and the prayers of their foe were misguided at best and heretical at worst. Therefore, a battle over the interpretation of the LP was a battle for the efficacy of both teaching and practice. In other words, whoever

[18] Jerome, *Dialogus adversus Pelagianos* 3.15, PL 23:585, "De baptismatis fonte surgentes, et regenerati in Dominum Salvatorem, impleto illo, quod de se scriptum est: *Beati quorum remissae sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata* (Ps. 31:1), statim in prima communione corporis Christi dicunt: *Et dimitte nobis debita nostra*, quae illis fuerant in Christi confessione dimissa; et tu arrogans et superbus de sanctarum puritate manuum, munditia eloquii gloriaris. Quamvis sit hominis perfecta conversio, et post vitia atque peccata virtutum plena possessio, numquid possunt sic esse sine vitio, quomodo illi, qui statim de Christi fonte procedunt? Et tamen jubentur dicere: *Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*: non humilitatis mendacio, ut tu interpretaris, sed pavore fragilitatis humanae suam conscientiam formidantis." Translation in FC 53, p. 372.

made the best argument for the correct interpretation of the LP not only had the upper hand in doctrinal debates, but also had the right to claim that their prayers and worship were more efficacious than their opponent's.

Similarly since early churches taught the LP to converts in order to impart the basic elements of Christian doctrine, it is not surprising that the LP was also used to get those who may have joined another questionable group to return to the true faith. Since the LP represented for early polemicists the gospel in its most basic and pure form, those who had strayed from its teachings must be reminded of the faith that they learned, often at the moment they emerged from the baptismal font. If anyone claimed to be Christian but taught doctrines that could not be reconciled with the LP, then they were in error and in need at best correction and at worst redeeming. Augustine especially believed that the primary grace God offered the faithful in the LP was perseverance. Therefore the LP was a good text to teach those who were not persevering properly in order that they might once again persist anew in the true faith.

The Lord's Prayer as an Apology for Unity

The LP also was marshaled in a polemical way not only to counter heretical or doctrinally or ritually suspect groups but to seek unity between all Christians no matter how they may had become divided. The clearest example of this is found in Cyprian's treatise, *On the Lord's Prayer* (*De Dominica Oratione*, c. 252), which was written shortly after he wrote his more famous works, *On Unity* (*De Ecclesiae Unitate*, c. 251) and his *On the Lapsed* (*De Lapsis*, c. 250). All three writings strongly emphasize Cyprian's idea the church must not only be unified in mind (i.e., true doctrine, free from internal strife), but also in its body (i.e., convictions, remaining faithful in the face of external persecution). There is no salvation outside of the church, as Cyprian has famously stated. The LP reveals that even though members come from diverse backgrounds, like many streams into one river or many roots into one tree, they are bound by the words, "Our Father" which acknowledges the reality that through the birthing waters of baptism all believers are adopted children of the most high God and one family in the faith and practice. Therefore Christians are of one mind (*unanimis*), one faith,

and one people, children of the heavenly Father, and this is what the LP continuously reveals.[19]

The Lord's Prayer as a Supersessionist Apology Against the Jews

Cyprian's emphasis upon unity, however, also moved him to distinguish Christians from non-Christians. Christians are united by their baptisms and the fact they pray to one Father in the LP. By extension Christians may be distinguished from those who are not baptized, namely the Jews and Gentiles.

Through the adoption of baptism and the praying to God as Father in the LP, Christ is brother, the church is mother, the baptismal font the womb of mother church out of which believers are born, and other believers are siblings in the faith. Cyprian expanded this line of logic to include the idea that the words "Our Father" also stand as a reproach to the Jews, because he believed they rejected the heavenly Father when they rejected Jesus.[20] The Hebrews, as he calls them, literally gave up their inheritance, says Cyprian, and in turn embraced the Devil as their Father. Christians, by way of contrast to the Jews, are sanctified and adopted by God in the baptismal font and therefore they have the right to pray with confidence to God as Father in the words of the LP.[21] Cyprian condemned what he called the wordy prayers and empty rituals of the Jews in light of the succinct and mysteriously powerful LP. Unfortunately this type of argumentation promoted a supersessionist thinking that became nearly ubiquitous in LP commentaries in general and in works that use the LP in a more polemical manner through the middle ages and beyond.[22]

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[19] Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 23 & 30; FC 36, pp. 147 & 153; CCSL 3 A, pp. 104 & 108.

[20] Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 2 and 9; CCSL 3 A, p. 94.

[21] Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione* 10; FC 36, pp. 134f.; CCSL 3 A, p. 95; Cf. Froehlich, "The Lord's Prayer in Patristic Literature," pp. 74f.; *Apostolic Constitutions* 7:45; and Willy Rordorf, "The Lord's Prayer in the Light of Its Liturgical Use in the Early church," *Studia Liturgica* 14 (1980/81), pp. 1–19.

[22] Tertullian declared quite baldly that the Jews were the old children of God, but Christians are the new children. On the other hand, the LP is a "bulwark of faith," a defensive and offensive weapon against the enemy. Tertullian, *De Oratione* 29; CCSL 1, p. 274, "Oratio murus est fidei, arma et tela nostra aduersus hostem.…"

According to Augustine, the precepts of Jesus are superior to those of Moses' because Christians become sons and daughters of God, the Father, through Christ in

What is important to note about the use of the LP in supersessionist arguments of this nature in the early church is that they were presented in books whose main audience was other Christians and not in polemical works intended to dialogue with Jews. It may be that since the LP was largely an in-house prayer (see chapter six in this volume) the intention was primarily to demonstrate to the newly chosen children of God their special status. In order to do this the contrast was made, namely these early authors argued that the Jews had failed in their obligations as the people of God and had been replaced. This type of argumentation no doubt contributed to anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism within the church from a very early date.[23]

The Lord's Prayer as an Apology against "Pagans"

Others, like Ambrose, attacked not only the Jews but any gentile/pagan group who prayed with what he called a heaping up of empty phrases (Matthew 6:7ff). Tertullian declared that people ought not to draw near unto God with an "army of words" because "brevity rests upon the foundation of a great and fruitful interpretation, and in proportion as it is restrained in wording, so is it copious in meaning."[24] Those who

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baptism; therefore, they are motivated by kinship and love to obey God. However, the commandments passed on to the Hebrews by Moses suggest that the people of Israel followed God more as slaves and were motivated by fear. Augustine, *De Sermone Domini in Monte* 1.1.2 and 2.5.15–16.

[23] Cyprian's work *On the Lord's Prayer* proved to be enormously popular. Hilary of Poitiers (c. 315–367) in his commentary on Matthew found no reason to comment on Matthew 6:9–13, because, as he put it, Cyprian had already said all that needed to be said (PL 9:913). Augustine, in a letter to Valentinus, explained that he used Cyprian's commentary on the LP because Cyprian had anticipated the "poison of Pelagius." Augustine, Sermon 215; FC 32, p. 64. Even modern scholars have gone so far as to call Cyprian's commentary "the best work on the (LP) in the long history of Christianity." FC 36, p. 125.

[24] Tertullian, *De Oratione* 1; CCSL 1, p. 258, "Et tamen breuitas ista—quod ad tertium sophiae gradum faciat—magnae ac beatae interpretationis substantia fulta est quantumque substringitur uerbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus. Neque enim propria tantum orationis officia complexa est, uel uenerationem Dei aut hominis petitionem, sed omnem paene sermonem Domini, omnem commemorationem disciplinae, ut reuera in oratione breuiarium totius Euangelii comprehendatur." Translation by Evans, *Adversus Marcionem* p. 5

Origen and Gregory of Nyssa accused both the Jews and Gentiles of being people who multiply the words of their prayers in the hope that they might be heard. In this manner they seek that which God would forbid them, namely earthly goods such as wealth. However, Gregory of Nyssa noted that "[the faithful] gradually learn from their experience with smaller petitions that God hears their supplications, so that they

worship pagan gods, some early writers suggested, do not pray properly either in their own devotional lives or in worship. The gentiles blaspheme God by praying in an offensive way, but God desires to be glorified by all, even God's worst enemies.[25] And so for this reason Jesus gave the church the LP in order to teach the church, and eventually the whole world through the church, true practice in private prayer and public worship.

Some early authors used the LP as apology against pagan religions in an effort to promote Christianity. Juvencus (in his *The Four Books of the Gospels, Evangeliorum Libri IV*, a.k.a. *The Evangelical History, Evangelica Historica*, c. 330) and Coelius Sedulius (in his *Paschal Song*[26] c. 431) both in part sought to win Gentile converts by means of hexameter harmonizations of the gospels which were attempts to demonstrate that the true heroic epic of Jesus was superior to the fanciful myths that the pagans believed in.[27] Both Juvencus and Sedulius include hexameter poetic versifications of the LP which do not actually reveal to the reader the precise wording of the LP; they may have been attempting to preserve the *disciplina arcani* surrounding the LP and the tendency not to teach it to non-Christians. The poems were particularly popular within Christian circles and in this regard the focus was to demonstrate the superiority of one's own faith over and against that of others. Nevertheless they offer short paraphrase commentaries concerning the wisdom of the LP in part as a tool to put forth its divine teaching as they understood it in order to draw non-Christians into the fold, so to speak. In this way,

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may rise to the desire for the higher gifts which are more worthy of God." Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer*, pp. 32–33.

[25] Tertullian *De Oratione* 3; Augustine *De Sermone in Monte* 2.11; Augustine, Letter 130; Jerome, *Commentariorum in Mathaeum bibri IV*, 6.10; Pseudo-Quodvultdeus, PLS 3:300; Peter Chyrsologus, Sermon 67, 69–71; Ildefonsus of Toledo, *Liber de cognitione baptismi* 135.

[26] Critical editions of the *Paschale carmen* may be found in PL 19:433–752 which has a convenient side by side edition of the *Paschale carmen* and *Paschale opus*; CSEL 10; for partial English translations see George Sigerson, *The Easter Song* (Dublin: Talbot Press Ltd., 1922), R. A. Swanson, "Carmen Paschale I," *Classics Journal* 52 (1957), pp. 289–298, and Kuhnmuench, *Early Christian Latin Poets*.

[27] Sedulius even compared himself to the Apostle Paul, portraying himself as a latter-day Apostle to the Gentiles (Coelius Sedulius, *Paschale carmen* 1:38–44), who encouraged the "Athenians" (i.e., non-Christians, cf. Acts 17:16–34) to exchange the "barren wasteland" of their philosophies with "green fields of paradise" (i.e., Christian truth). Coelius Sedulius, *Paschale carmen* 1:49–59. Certain Christian writings, e.g., the *Confessions* of Augustine, clearly demonstrate how Christianity had an appeal among the educated elite of late fourth and fifth century world, and how brilliant philosophers at times converted to Christianity. Augustine's *Confessions* mention how Ambrose, Augustine, Victorinus, and numerous other noted philosophers converted to Christianity.

early authors may have both utilized the LP and preserved the cautious secrecy surrounding the LP while making apologetic arguments against pagan teachings and practices.

The Lord's Prayer as an Apology against Magical Incantations

By the fifth century some Christian teachers (for example, Augustine and Peter Chyrsologus) began to be less secretive with the LP and they started to teach the LP and other mysteries of the church to converts before they were baptized, generally during Lent as part of instruction and preparation for baptism. At about this time the polemical use of the LP shifted focus as well. Polemical debates had previously focused primarily upon how the Christian views of doctrine and prayer practices were superior to more heterodox Christian sects, Jews, and pagans. But in the sixth century the emphasis and use of the LP in polemical ways shifted toward the problem of pagan incantations and magic within Christian communities.

The most important factor affecting these new polemical arguments had to do with the context of baptism in early medieval worship. Early Christian converts had been mostly adults and therefore baptismal liturgical practice developed in a way that was appropriate for an audience that could be educated. The catechetical process taught adult converts the LP shortly after their baptisms. However, as more and more infants came to the baptismal font, the opportune moment, and even the ability, to teach the baptized the LP was lost, or at least had to be put off until they were old enough to be able to learn the short prayer. Christians during the fifth and following centuries at times grew up ignorant of the LP, the church's most succinct summary of the gospel. In order to remedy this situation some sixth century authors encouraged parents and godparents before and/or at an infant's baptism to teach the infant the LP whenever they were old enough to learn it. But sometimes the parent or sponsor themselves did not know the LP (perhaps because they had not been properly taught it after their own baptisms) and therefore they were unable to teach it and ignorance of the LP became a problem. For example, the sixth century bishop, Caesarius of Arles (d. 543), writes, "Remember the Creed and the Lord's Prayer yourself, and teach it to your children. I do not know with what boldness a man says he is a Christian, if he refuses to learn the few lines of the Creed and

the Lord's Prayer. Remember that you stood as surety before God for the sons you received in baptism, so always reprove and rebuke those whom you adopted at the font just as you do those who were born to you, so that they may live chastely, justly, and soberly."[28]

Caesarius of Arles likewise lamented that far too many Christians relied on pagan or magical incantations as a means of dealing with life's troubles. Those who partake in saying magical incantations, noted Caesarius, are in danger of losing the benefits that they received in the sacrament of baptism, because the devilish formulas literally turn misguided Christian evil doers back into pagans again and make their baptism null and void. In short, those who trust in incantations, no longer trust in the heavenly Father they pray to in the LP.[29] Christians rather are to remain true children of God by praying the LP in times of need: this in particular is one means by which they will be able to remain faithful believers. Caesarius declared, "Do not pin any faith on or pay any attention to the impious and ridiculous (interpretations of) sneezes. As often as there is need for you to hurry, sign yourself in the name of Christ, devoutly recite the Creed and Lord's Prayer, and go on your way secure in God's help."[30]

Similarly Caesarius complained that women, who sought to rid themselves of either extreme of barrenness or an unwanted pregnancy, often trusted "impious drugs" (which in his eyes was akin to a potion) to help them fulfill their desires. Rather, Caesarius admonished, "Let us, then continually say with our whole hearts the LP, 'Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' If we devoutly put our hopes in God's providence, we will win His favor in this life and will confidently appear before Him with a clear conscience in the life to come."[31] Ultimately, it is better to put one's hope in God's will (through the praying of the LP) than to seek to manipulate God's bidding by means of pagan incantations or magical potions. The sermons of Caesarius are some of the

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[28] Caesarius, Sermon 13, CCSL 103, pp. 65; translation in FC 31, p. 75. Cf. Sermons 1 and 19.

[29] Caesarius, Sermon 13; CCSL 103, pp. 67f.; FC 31, pp. 78f.: Sermon 19; CCSL 103; CCSL 103, pp. 89f.; FC 31, p. 101: Sermon 51; CCSL 103, pp. 227ff.; FC 31, pp. 256ff.: and Sermon 54; CCSL 103, pp. 235f.; FC 31, pp. 265f.

[30] Caesarius, Sermon 54, CCSL 103, p. 236, "Illas vero non solum sacrilegas sed etiam ridiculosas sternutationes considerare et observare nolite: sed quotiens vobis in quacumque parte fuerit necessitas properandi, signate vos in nomine Christi, et symbolum vel orationem dominicam fideliter dicentes, securi de dei adiutorio iter agite." Translation in FC 31, p. 266.

[31] Caesarius, Sermon 51; CCSL 103, pp. 277ff. Translation in FC 31, p. 268.

earliest in written record that connect the LP and magical incantations in this way, in the Latin West. In the East mention of the LP as a magical incantation may be found much earlier in the fourth century.[32]

The fact that the LP and pagan magical incantations appeared in this context is not surprising. Like earlier apologists, who used the LP to counter both heretical and pagan teachings, Caesarius now in a similar way warned errant Christians to replace their "pagan" practices with the more profitable practice of praying the LP (or Creed). Although now there is no concern here whatsoever concerning secrecy and/or guarding the LP from non-Christians, Caesarius simply wanted Christians to say the LP wherever and whenever they needed its help, in public or in private.

Martin of Braga (d. 579), who was known for his sixth-century missionary activity against the Arian Sueves in Spain (in his *Sermon to Common Folk*, S*ermo rusticus* c. 572–574,[33] a.k.a. *On the Correction of the Common Folk* or *De correctione rusticorum*),[34] went one step further than Caesarius and actually called the LP a "holy incantation," which should replace "devilish incantations."[35] The wording is indeed surprising. Martin appears to have known Caesarius's work, but Martin not only suggested that the LP should replace incantations, but that it indeed could be an incantation of a holy variety.

Martin and Caesarius both argued against Christians who involve themselves in suspect/pagan practices saying that the use of more holy prayers in the place of magical incantations was more Christian. However, one problem appears to have been that many did not know the LP. Therefore, the Caesarius, and some who came after him, attempted to provide believers with a compelling incentive for learning and praying

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[32] Felix Grendon, "Anglo-Saxon Charms," *Journal of American Folklore* 22 (1905), pp. 151f., discusses this and says that the majority are Paternosters, which are prescribed for recital in about 1/4th of the charms.

[33] Claude W. Barlow, *Martini Episcopi Bracarensis: Opera Omnia*, (New Haven, Conn., 1950), pp. 160ff.

[34] For editions of Martin's work see PL 72:17–52 and PL 84:575–586; *Martini Episcopi Bracarensis: Opera Omnia*, Claude W. Barlow ed., (New Haven, Conn., 1950); C. P. Caspari, *Martin von Baraccaras Schrift* De Correctione Rusticorum (Christiana, 1883). English translations of *De Correctione Rusticorum* may be found in FC 62; Harold F. Palmer, *Martin of Bracara, De correctione rusticorum. A Commentary with an Introduction and Translation* (Washington D.C.: Master's Thesis, Catholic University of America, 1932). Also see the useful discussion in Stephen McKenna, *Paganism and Pagan Survivals in Spain up to the Fall of the Visigothic Kingdom* (Washington D.C. 1938).

[35] Martin of Braga, *Sermo rusticus* in Barlow, *Opera Omnia*, p. 199; translation in FC 62, p. 82.

the LP, namely that the LP was a holy incantation which was more powerful than pagan incantations. Of course, if one did not know it, then they were unable to wield it. Neither Martin nor Caesarius implied that the mere repetition of the LP at a time of trouble would be sufficient reason for God to hear their prayers. Rather, they both encouraged the faithful to learn the LP and its meaning in order that they might know the faith better and so that they might find comfort and power to defeat evil with the holy words of Jesus himself. Their audience, however, may have at times misunderstood the intentions of the bishops, that is, they recited the words as an incantation that worked simply because the words were spoken at the appropriate time and context. There is indeed some evidence that some learned and called upon the LP as a magical prayer in its own right: the meaning of the LP's phrases may at times have become secondary to the mindless rapid repetition of its words in times of need. Nevertheless even then the LP was perceived to be a prayer of mysterious power which could help the most desperate believer.[36]

Later documents like the eighth-century anonymous sermon entitled *A Homily on Sacrilegious Things* (*Homilia de sacrilegiis*)[37] and the ninth century Old Saxon Gospel known as the *Heliand* are evidence that Christians from this time indeed interpreted the LP as having special magical powers. The *Heliand* states that one of the more intelligent heroes of the faith approached Jesus and asked him, "Teach us to pray the secret runes" meaning the LP (cf. Luke 11:4). The LP in this instance was perceived to be a more powerful spell than any other religions could offer. Those who prayed the words of the LP had direct access to true "Power" namely God.

The *Heliand* author considered all the words of the gospels to be full of power, but the words of the LP were beyond magic in their potency, because the author of the words was the mighty Chieftain himself, Jesus.[38] In the end, G. Ronald Murphy notes, "The Lord's Prayer thus becomes most specifically the replacement for Woden's runic charms that were relied on in the north to give access to the

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[36] Martin of Braga, *Sermo rusticus* in Barlow, *Opera Omnia*, p. 199; translation in FC 62, p. 82.

[37] *Homilia de sacrilegiis* 4.14 in C. P. Caspari ed., *Eine Augustine Fälsch beilegte Homilia de sacrilegiis* (Christiana, 1886), p. 9.

[38] G. Ronald Murphy, Trans. and ed., *The Heliand: The Saxon Gospel* (New York, 1992), pp. 54ff.

divine. Jesus is depicted as Woden, knowing secret sayings that grant divine contact and placing power into the hands of selected followers who know the secret formulas. Now this information is revealed and given to the Saxons!"[39]

Not long after this, the idea that the very letters of the words of the LP were magic runes was taken one step further in the ninth or perhaps early tenth-century *Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn*, "an Old English philosophical and poetic discussion of pagan and Judaeo-Christian wisdom."[40] The letters P, A, T, E, and R (the last being the most fierce letter of all), along with the other letters in the LP, were portrayed as individual warriors that routed the devil in battle. Says the Dialogues (Poem I), "The first [letter] whose name is P, this warrior has a long rod with a golden goad, and the grim enemy fiend he keeps beating with it ferociously; following on his track comes A—with super-strength!—and also beats on him…"[41] Both the poetic and prose parts of the Dialogues offer fantastic descriptions of the LP doing battle and shape shifting against the greatest threat of all, the Devil. Although not polemical documents per se, the *Heliand* and the *Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn* both reflect a context where the LP was used polemically to refute pagan beliefs and practices which involved incantations and magic. They are in essence the logical end result of early medieval polemical speculation about the LP.

Early medieval Christians at times were interested in learning the LP sometimes because clergy primarily promoted its incantational benefits and at other times simply because of the importance of the LP for the Christian tradition of faith and practice. There were other reasons for learning the LP, such as priests encouraging the recitation of the LP in penitential practices in order to do proper penance, and, during the Carolingian era in the eighth and ninth centuries, bishops made learning the LP a requirement for becoming godparents. However, polemically speaking, the LP came to be used to refute pagan teachings and practices that were dying hard among Christians at a time when most of the early doctrinal issues with the Gnostics, Marcionites,

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[39] G. Ronald Murphy, *The Saxon Savior: The Germanic Transformation of the Gospel in the Ninth-Century Heliand* (Oxford, 1989), p. 90.

[40] G. Ronald Murphy, *The Saxon Savior: The Germanic Transformation of the Gospel in the Ninth-Century Heliand*, p. 215.

[41] G. Ronald Murphy, *The Saxon Savior: The Germanic Transformation of the Gospel in the Ninth-Century Heliand*, p. 216.

Pelagians, and the like had been largely settled. In the early middle ages, as in the time of the early church, the LP was believed to be an effective weapon in refuting both the teachings and practices of those who were not Christian, or who were clinging to what was considered non-Christian ways even if they called themselves, "Christian." Still some Christians from the latter part of the early middle ages were more interested in the LP as the ultimate Christian incantation, which was the incantation to replace all incantations, a mystery beyond all mystery, and a power to overcome all others.

Conclusion

Christian polemicists over the first ten centuries were fond of using the LP to refute both the teachings and practices of those who were considered heretic, Jewish, pagan, and even the slightly suspect, divisive, or given to false religious practices. The LP was a prayer of mystery and power, a prayer of divine brevity, the most succinct version of the gospel, and, because it originally issued from the godly lips of Jesus, it was the truest prayer of heaven on earth, a heavenly pearl dropped from the mouth of Christ himself. And so the battle over the LP was a battle over the authenticity of the belief and piety of early Christians over and against the perceived ideas and religious practices which appeared to threaten various churches.

Early churches used the LP cautiously to refute the erroneous teachings and practices within the church first and then against those who were not Christians, even if the polemic was not in dialogue with outsiders but merely an in-house document for other Christians. The emphasis in this early period was upon the mysterious teaching of the faith and proper understanding of the wisdom of the LP and its right use. However, later in the sixth and following centuries the LP moved authors to focus upon the power of the LP as a holy incantation in order to encourage believers not only to learn it but to utilize it in their everyday lives. During the days of the early church, polemicists first attempted to correct the errors of schismatics with the LP and then they sought to refute the folly of the world with the divine wisdom of the LP. However, slowly over time, the LP came to be seen as a mysterious prayer of wonder, a magical incantation in its own right, and a prayer of unequaled power and mystery. This did in the end at least provide believers with a strong reason for learning it. Therefore, throughout the

time of the early church the LP was an important polemical tool and means by which various churches guarded the truth they so vigorously believed in. Sometimes this fervor led to intolerant attitudes towards others and at other times it solidified the faithful with a unity grounded in the most important prayer of the church. There was at least a semblance of unity and hope that the faithful might be united in the mysteriously powerful words of Christ, which they believed were given by God to promote true faith and practice throughout the world.

SECTION 3

PRAYER DURING THE NINTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

CHAPTER TEN

THE PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS OF ST. ANSELM OF CANTERBURY

Benedicta Ward, SLG

The traditional material for meditation in Christianity has always been rooted in the scriptures and especially in the Jewish prayer book, the book of the psalms.[1] For centuries, it remained the basis of prayer, private as well as liturgical, the words being used to express the emotions of love and repentance which lead to compunction of heart and desire for God. In the eleventh century, there was a change, not in the fundamental way in which prayer arose out of compunction, nor in the scriptural basis of meditation, but in an expansion of the kind of material used to express such prayer. This change must be attributed to Anselm of Canterbury; it was so profound that it has been called "the Anselmian transformation."[2] Anselm provided new words for meditation out of his own prayers and a new method of using these words emerged, leading into a new age of meditation.

Anselm himself wrote only 18 prayers and 3 meditations, but these were so popular that they were widely copied and were eventually lost among the multitude of imitations. The basis for modern study of Anselm's prayers was the definition of the canon of his genuine works at the beginning of the twentieth century. The confusion between Anselm's prayers and those of his imitators had been perpetuated by the Maurist edition of Dom Gabriel Gerberon in 1675, and by Migne in his use of Gerberon's text for *Patralogia Latina* in 1883. It was only in 1923 that this state of confusion was either observed or dealt with. Then, Dom Andre Wilmart began his systematic work of distinguishing the genuine prayers from the spurious additions, and he presented his conclusions in a series of articles between 1923 and 1932. These studies

[1] For further discussion of the use of the psalms in meditation before Anselm, see Benedicta Ward "Bede and the Psalter" Jarrow Lecture 1998.

[2] R.W. Southern, *St. Anselm: a Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge 1990), pp. 99–106.

formed a foundation for the next stage, the critical edition of a text. Dom Franciscus Schmitt undertook the edition of the Opera Omnia, which appeared in six volumes between 1938 and 1961, of which vol. 3 contained the prayers and meditations.[3] Also important for a true estimate of Anselm and his prayers is the critical edition of the text of the *Vita S. Anselmi* by Sir Richard Southern in 1962[4] for the light it throws on Anselm himself, but also for the care with which his biographer Eadmer recorded the circumstances in which most of Anselm's works were produced. This is especially important with respect to Anselm as a devotional writer since the *Prayers and Meditations* were the part of his works which were most imitated by others.[5] Equally illuminating are the *Letters of St Anselm*,[6] several of which relate to the *Prayers*.

Anselm's genuine prayers form a relatively small body of material and, because of the care with which Anselm wrote, the manuscript tradition is not difficult to interpret. Each prayer is complete in itself, though inter-related to Anselm's other works; he did not forget what he had written already, and start out on unrelated lines; he wrote with care and knew just what he wanted to say, what he wanted preserved, and in what order. Dom Wilmart examined the recensions of one of his three Prayers to Saint Mary[7] and these show the meticulous care, which Anselm took over words, phrases and the exact shape of the whole. These are personal, intimate prayers and while it is possible to see what light they throw on Anselm's personality, it also important to see the *Prayers and Meditations* as a key part of the Christian spiritual tradition.

What most impressed his contemporaries about Anselm was his God-centered erudition and also his readiness to communicate his learning. Eadmer says of him: "being continually given up to God and to spiritual exercises, he attained such a height of divine speculation that

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[3] F. S. Schmitt, *Sancti Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, (Nelson 1938–61), vol. 111.

[4] Eadmer, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed and trans. by R. W. Southern, (Oxford, 1962).

[5] Cf. Anselm, *Les Meditations et Prieres de S. Anselme*, French trans. by D. A. Castel (Paris, 1923), introduction by Andre Wilmart. For a more recent discussion of the prayers associated with Anselm, see Jean-Francois Cottier, *Anima mea; prieres privees et textes de devotion du Moyen Age latin* (Louvain, 2002).

[6] *The Letters of Anselm of Canterbury*, trans. by Walter Frohlich, 3 vols. (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1990).

[7] Cf. A. Wilmart, "Les propres corrections de S. Anselme dans sa grande priere a la Vierge Marie," *Rescherches de théologie ancienne et mêdiévale* 11, 1930, 189–204.

he was able by God's help to see into and unravel many most obscure and previously insoluble questions about the divinity of God and about our faith and to prove by plain arguments that what he said was firm and catholic faith."[8]

He knew a great deal, but what also struck his biographer was his willingness and ability to communicate it. Anselm was available, he could be approached, he was a good companion—monks and clergymen enjoyed his conversation, but so did court ladies like Mathilda of Tuscany, and the Norman nobles of England, up to and including William the Conqueror himself and the formidable Earl Hugh of Chester. The monk, the aesthetic, the scholar—all these were part of Anselm, but at the same time he was loved as a friend, as a good companion, as, simply, a good man, a man of prayer.

This capacity for love, for relationship, for caring for others appears in the way the collection of *Prayers and Meditations* first circulated: they are intimate, personal prayers, revealing the writer, and making him vulnerable to those who read them. Yet he was ready to send such prayers to those who asked for them, and to give advice about their use. He was not concerned about himself, his reputation as a writer or as a scholar; he simply wanted the recipients to use the prayers so that they would grow in the love of God, as he did himself. One of the prayers was "For Friends" and its text shows the basis of this love, as being a union of hearts within the shared love of Christ rather than a result of human compatibility. For Anselm, it was the supreme gift of friendship to share spiritual experience in this way, not as a teacher and spiritual master, but as a companion in the ways of tribulation and glory.[9]

Anselm was at home in the courts of kings; and he was equally at home in the court of heaven. There, the saints were his friends, and in the prayers he addressed them as such. They were his friends at court, the great ones who had the friendship with the King of kings to which he also desired to be admitted. In the many of the prayers he talked to them with familiarity, even taunting Peter with his betrayal of the Lord,[10] insisting on the good offices of John as the most intimate of Christ's

[8] Eadmer, *Vita S Anselmi*, 1.7, p. 12.

[9] Cf. Discussion of the Prayers in R. W. Southern, *St. Anselm: a Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 91–134, and B. Ward, English trans. *Prayers and Meditations of St Anselm with the Proslogion*, (Harmondsworth, 1973), Introduction, pp. 27–82. (All quotations from Anselm's prayers are taken from this translation and the page numbers refer to this.)

[10] "Prayer to St. Peter," p. 137.

friends,[11] and imagining, with sensitivity and insight, the emotions of Mary Magdalene meeting Christ after the resurrection.[12]

Anselm showed himself through his prayers to be a good friend, and a good man, but not as a man who was born good. There is in Anselm a quality of genuineness, a kind of basic self-knowledge that kept him free from illusions and pretentiousness. In the *Vita*, Eadmer says he learnt much about Anselm's early life from the saint himself, "He used as if in jest to relate in homely language in the midst of his other conversation what he did as a boy, as a young man, or before he adopted the monastic habit."[13]

It seems probable that these stories included the account Eadmer gives of Anselm's choice of a monastic way of life, which is by no means the edifying story one would expect and says much for Anselm's lack of both pride and illusion that he repeated it, as well as for Eadmer's honesty that he recorded it. What he told his friends about his life before he became a monk also included a detailed account of a dream he had a small child, which had in it all the main themes of his later prayers[14] including his acute sense of sin which was to be one of the main themes of the later prayers. In this Anselm spoke from his own experience. His long and complex prayers for the inner chamber were offered for the use of others but there is no doubt that he himself first prayed them; these were no mere literary exercises, they were Anselm's real understanding of himself. They contain all the exclamations and groans of sorrow of the man who prayed them:

> Vae, vae, vae hinc et vae illinc,
> o miserrima et plus quam miserimma commutatio
> heu, et heu- parce, deus, parce.[15]

This emphasis on sin and repentance forms the first part of each of the prayers and meditations, and brings to life Anselm's more austere and technical comments about sin elsewhere. Sin for Anselm was not a personal psychological apprehension of wrong doing; it was a theological truth about man in relation to God. In *Cur Deus Homo* he outlined his doctrine of sin and in his prayed version of that treatise,

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[11] "Prayer to St. John the Evangelist," p. 160.
[12] "Prayer to St. Mary Magdalene," p. 202.
[13] *Vita S Anselmi*, 2.71, p. 49.
[14] *Vita S Anselmi*, 1.2, pp. 4–5.
[15] Meditation 2, pp. 225–229.

the *Meditation on Human Redemption*, he wrote: Were it not better that the whole world and whatever exists except God should perish and be reduced to nothing, than that you should do anything however small, against the will of God?[16] And elsewhere he asked himself, "How can any sin be called small when it is an offence against God?"[17]

In the prayers this doctrinal truth took on a passionate and personal intensity, "I am afraid of my life, for when I examine myself carefully, it seems to me that my whole life is either sinful or sterile."[18] "God is most just and I have greatly sinned; how should he hear my cry?"[19] "You refashioned your gracious image in me and I superimposed upon it the image that is hateful; alas, alas how could I?"[20] Such self-abasement would seem overdone if seen a self-conscious display of guilt for particular sins but for Anselm it was rather the dramatic expression of his theological conviction about the state of mankind, including himself, and his first step towards changing this was to acknowledge it and express it personally.

In the first meditation Anselm's sense of failure and loss was expressed in language which worked towards an appalling crisis in a description of judgment, couched in phrases from the prophet Zephaniah which were to become familiar later in the crashing phrases of the *Dies Irae*, "…that great day of the Lord is nigh, it is near and comes quickly, a day of wrath and mourning, of tribulation and of anguish."[21]

The second Meditation, one of the earliest in the collection, "A lament for virginity unhappily lost" was entirely a lament for sin, containing only a final half sentence of hope. It is the most artificial in style of the prayers, and one that sounds to the modern reader to be verging on the hysterical. There is no reason for not taking Anselm to mean in this prayer exactly what he says, "My soul, it is of your own free will that you are miserably cast down from the highest virginity to the lowest pit of fornication."[22] On the other hand, this "loss of virginity" need not conjure up scenes of a sort of Rake's Progress through Normandy into the cloisters of Bec; with Anselm's sensitivity to sin, his definition of "adultery" was probably of a less picturesque kind.

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[16] "Meditation on Human Redemption," p. 222.
[17] Meditation 1, p. 221.
[18] "Prayer to St. Nicholas," p. 184.
[19] Meditation 1, p. 221.
[20] "Prayer to St. John the Baptist," (2) p. 129.
[21] Meditation 1, pp. 221–2.
[22] Meditation 2, p. 226.

There was in Anselm as scholar, monk, abbot and archbishop, a solemn awareness of sin, of judgment, of hell; and yet for him the crisis of fear turned over, like the crest of a wave, into the other side of his prayers which was confident faith: "…but it is he himself, it is Jesus; the same is my judge between whose hands I tremble."[23] From that point, Anselm passed into reliance on mercy; with his sense of sin went an equal capacity for delight. As in his life, so in his prayer, he was able to enjoy as well as deplore; at the other end of the scale in the prayers there is the beauty of heaven and the joy of being with God which forms the conclusion of each prayer; in the end there is the happy society of friends, alive in the life of God, who "rest in joy and joy in rest," as he said at the end of the *Proslogion*, "…in the perfection of charity of countless blessed angels and men, where no-one loves another any less than he loves himself, they will all rejoice for each other as they do for themselves…They will rejoice in the perfection of happiness, and such bliss will outrun their capacity for joy."[24] In a letter recommending the *Proslogion* to Hugh the Hermit as containing his teaching on prayer, Anselm sums up the work of prayer with "Give love and receive the kingdom."[25]

What lay between the hell of self and the heaven of shared love? Desire—a longing for God focused through the passion of Christ. Personal involvement with the details of the sorrows and sufferings of Christ was a natural way for Anselm to pray. He understood the sufferings of Christ as the cost of redemption and expressed this theological conviction in the careful phrases of *Cur Deus Homo*, and in the "Meditation on Human Redemption," the prayed version of the longer treatise, this theory became personal confrontation, "Lord, you gave yourself up to death that I might live."[26] This personal involvement with the kenotic Christ in the details of his sufferings was meant to provoke compunction, the piercing of the heart which leads from sin to salvation in the classic tradition of Christian prayer.

What Anselm contributed to this tradition was twofold: first, new material, an alternative to the psalms, for use by individuals in private; and secondly, an involvement with doctrine and sacred event which

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[23] Meditation 1, p. 226.
[24] *Proslogion*, p. 264.
[25] Anselm, "Letter 112 to Hugh the Hermit," in the *Letters of Anselm of Canterbury*, trans. by Walter Frohlich, 3 vols. (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1990), vol. 1, pp. 268–27.
[26] Meditation 3, p. 235.

began with the emotions leading to an effort of the will; it was a new starting point, and one which deeply influenced the whole of medieval devotion. It marks the same tradition in devotion that is seen in art by the change from the austere and crowned Christ on the cross in triumph to the human and suffering figure of the man of sorrows.

The "Prayer to Christ" most clearly reflects the emotions of the new devotion; there is meditation on the details of the suffering of Christ, but in it Christ is not seen in isolation. Beside Christ on the cross Anselm pictures "the most pure virgin, his mother"; and there is "happy Joseph" taking down the Lord from the cross; and the angels of the resurrection, with their message, "fear not, Jesus who was crucified whom you seek is not here, he is risen."[27] Most of the prayers are addressed to individual saints, and, with their help, to Christ,—John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, John the Evangelist, as well as Mary, and, less predictably, Nicholas of Bari, lately of Myra. The need for an intercessor, a friend at court, who will speak a word with the great Lord, is behind this approach to prayer, and this also is closely linked with Anselm's more sober expressions of theology. Redemption was necessary, in Anselm's view, but it was never simply an individual affair and it was never easy. Mercy and justice had to be combined, and the image of a great king surrounded by courtiers who can ask him favors was one way of demonstrating the connection. The later medieval tendency in popular religion to attribute mercy to the Mother of God and leave justice to her Son was a corruption of Anselm's thought, though it may have been derived from a reading of, for instance, the great court scene in the 2nd "Prayer to St. Mary":

> The accused flees from the Just Judge
> to the merciful mother of the Judge…
> good mother, reconcile your Son to his servant.[28]

In the *Prayers*, then, Anselm can be seen as he saw himself,—sinful, alone, far from God, a sinner before his redeemer, needing mercy and desiring with all his heart to belong to God in the companionship of heaven. He would do anything he could to attain this end, and he was also ready to enjoy the end when he has got it; he was no worried neurotic who would insist on feeling guilty and unworthy even in heaven, but one who was able to receive joy as a gift. From his own

[27] "Prayer to Christ," p. 96.
[28] "Prayer to St. Mary," (2) p. 112.

experience of compunction, the piercing of the heart by sorrow for sin, came his desire for God and his longing for heaven; and again words and images expressed and deepened this desire, which, Eadmer tells us was characteristic of his whole life,—"his whole desire was fixed on those things only which are of God."[29]

Anselm's life and prayer were one, and in many ways Anselm's theology can also be approached through his prayers. This is true, for instance, of his theology of the monastic life, about which he wrote no treatise, but which can be deduced from letters and sayings, and which is given life in the prayers. His intense conservatism, his passion for obedience and stability, his concern to observe and preserve all the customs of the monastic life, especially the significance he attached to the habit, are confirmed by his "Prayer to St. Benedict":

> I profess to lead a life of continual turning to God
> as I promised in taking the name and habit of a monk,
> but my long life cries out against me,
> and my conscience convicts me,
> as a liar to God and angels and men.[30]

Anselm had no criticism to make of the monastic way of life; it was not a just another human institution but a way pleasing "to God and angels and men," and he had promised to follow it and be changed by it; therefore what he lamented was not that he was a monk, but that he was not a better monk. "How dare I call myself a soldier of Christ a disciple of St. Benedict?" he wrote, and his prayer to St. Benedict was that he would help him to make better use of the rule and customs, which, in turn would cleanse him from sin; in fact in order to be a monk he must live as a monk. In his prayer "For any Abbot or Bishop," Anselm saw the responsibilities of authority in the same way and this was given poignancy by his own position as abbot and as archbishop.[31] Again, the prayers to St. Mary, especially the third prayer, illuminate not only Anselm's doctrine of the Mother of God, which he does not specifically elaborate elsewhere, but it throws light upon his whole theory of the incarnation, lighting up and making real the dry sentences of the *Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi*. In his "Prayer to St. Paul" he was one

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[29] *Vita S Anselmi*, 1.2, p. 35.
[30] "Prayer to St. Benedict," p. 196.
[31] "Prayer for Any Abbot," pp. 207–211. This prayer is analyzed in relation to Anselm as archbishop of Canterbury in "Canterbury Chronicle," No. 88, 1994, pp. 16–22.

of the first theologians to explore the concept of "Jesus our mother," using maternal imagery to illuminate the work of Christ.[32] The supreme example of this interplay between the prayer and doctrine is of course the third meditation, "'On Human Redemption," which is a summary, in the form of a prayer, of *Cur Deus Homo*. Here, the arguments about the manner of the Atonement became a demonstration of the redeeming act of God in Christ, a personal encounter with what had been defined, "Consider the strength of your salvation, and where it is found; meditate upon it, delight in the contemplation of it, taste the goodness of your redeemer, be on fire with love for your Redeemer."[33]

The intimate absorbing of what he understood about the Atonement, ("taste" was the word he used, elsewhere "chew, suck, bite, swallow,") led Anselm directly into prayers of adoration, of repentance, of thanksgiving and of petition, followed by a prayer of commitment to Christ,—"draw me to you Lord in the fullness of love, I am wholly yours by creation, make me all yours, too, in love."[34] The devotion to the name of Jesus, so central to later medieval devotion, also had its beginning in Anselm's prayers and arose out of his consideration of the Incarnation: in his first meditation on the judgment of God, he ends with a long and passionate prayer to Jesus, as lover and savior of his soul.

Moreover, in these highly personal prayers there is a method of praying which also had immense effect on medieval devotion; in his preface to the *Prayers and Meditations* he suggested how they should be used and so outlined a new way of reading and praying in which the individual praying was central. His first premise in this way of prayer was that man is alienated from God and is therefore indifferent to him. In order to return, man must want to respond and be prepared to try,—by finding time and space to be still; then his apathy has to be broken through, and Anselm used every means by words and images to do this. In presenting his prayers for the use of others, Anselm gave directions about their use, making them a source of material for meditation.[35]

In order to help the one wanting to pray to rouse himself from apathy into alert and responsive prayer, Anselm made use of every

[32] "Prayer to St. Paul," pp. 152–6.
[33] Meditation 3, p. 230.
[34] Meditation 3, p. 273.
[35] Anselm, Preface, p. 90.

resource of the Latin language. It has often been observed that he was a grammarian, that he cared for language and words as a medieval monk was bound to do, as having far more than mere utilitarian value in the exchange of ideas. Especially in the *Prayers and Meditations*, Anselm made deliberate use of language to express and convey the experience he was communicating. Rhyme, assonance, antithesis, parallel grammatical constructions, abound in the prayers, sometimes seem too highly mannered, sometimes merely childish, but very often they are essential to a true understanding of his meaning. The prayers were subtle, complex, demanding thoughtful and close attention, where words as well as images and ideas were used to call forth the response of abasement, repentance, delight, contrition, adoration.

The study of the small body of Anselm's genuine devotional works shows his place in Christian spirituality and theology. They show the hard won unity Anselm made within himself between thought and emotion, between doctrine and devotion. He used his own words in prayer to God, and used them in private, and therefore gave a pattern for others to do the same; not only were his words used by others and a multitude of meditations written for others to use in the same style, but this distancing from the actual words of the psalms gave a new way into using one's own words spontaneously in prayer. This could and did lead to a certain tone of sentimentality, which has sometimes been attributed to Anselm; but such comments about him as a devotional writer have been in fact comments on his imitators, not on his genuine works. The prayers and meditation of Anselm mark a turning point in the history of devotion; they remain also a valid way of prayer for anyone who, as Anselm said, "wants to ponder more deeply those things that make him want to pray."[36]

[36] Anselm, preface, p. 90.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

LIBELLI PRECUM IN THE CENTRAL MIDDLE AGES

Susan Boynton

The idea of the *libellus precum* as a distinct type of prayer collection in manuscript form emerged in the twentieth century. André Wilmart's work in the 1930s and 1940s, particularly his edition of prayers in four Carolingian manuscripts, initiated the long tradition of scholarship that views the *libellus precum* as a distinct textual genre and manuscript type.[1] Although the most literal interpretation of the expression *libellus precum* would imply a codicologically independent gathering or "little book" containing predominantly prayer texts, in actuality scholars use it to cover an extremely wide spectrum of manuscripts and text collections. This essay reviews the literature on *libelli precum*, emphasizing the diversity of materials encompassed by this term and arguing for greater consideration of the manuscript context in studies of prayer during the central Middle Ages. In the Appendices, I present the contents of two Psalters from around 1100 that include *libelli precum*, in order to provide examples of manuscript descriptions that situate the prayer collections among the other texts that make up the book as a whole.

Libelli precum typically contain prayers to the persons of the Trinity (both individually and together), the Virgin Mary, the saints, angels, and apostles, often but not necessarily in that order. In some cases the contents are limited to only a few of these addressees. There is considerable variation in the number of prayers for individual saints, the size of the collection, and the length of individual prayers. Most *libelli precum* are unique collections of texts; while not all the texts within them are unique, their combination and ordering usually are. Prayers

[1] Among Wilmart's most influential studies on prayer and prayerbooks are "The Prayers of the Bury Psalter," *Downside Review* 48 (1930), 1–19; "Le manuel de prières de saint Jean Gualbert," *Revue bénédictine* 48 (1936), 259–99; "Prières médiévales pour l'adoration de la Croix," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 46 (1932), 3–46; *Precum Libelli Quattuor Aevi Karolini* (Rome, 1940). For an earlier survey of scholarship on Carolingian *libelli precum* see Michael Driscoll, "The *precum libelli* and Carolingian Spirituality," *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy Annual Meeting* (Valparaiso, IN, 1990), 68–76.

that are common to several manuscripts may appear in a different order in each one. Even groups of texts that are commonly transmitted together often vary slightly because of prayers added or omitted to the series. Consequently, *libelli precum* are often analyzed and edited as textual units or blocks.

Wilmart's edition of 1940 drew upon four manuscripts of the ninth century, all from ecclesiastical (and mainly monastic) scriptoria. The excerpts he selected encompass a wide variety of genres: prayers, hymns, abbreviated Psalters, confessions, and set of liturgical texts to recite during specific hours of the divine office. They also include groupings of psalms for particular spiritual purposes, a kind of practice also described in texts such as the *De psalmorum usu* of Alcuin.[2] In the preface to his edition Wilmart did not furnish complete descriptions of the manuscripts or explain why he chose certain texts over others.[3] As a result, the edition radically separates the prayers edited from their manuscript context. More recent editions (particularly of Insular prayer manuscripts) have presented the texts in the context of the whole manuscript.[4] Wilmart, a seasoned liturgical scholar, was certainly aware of the contents of the manuscripts in addition to the prayers. It was probably methodological bias rather than a lack of aptitude that led him to isolate the prayers as a separate textual tradition, for he maintained that "liturgical prayer and private prayer are distinct types."[5] In medieval manuscripts, however, such a strict division can be difficult to establish. Indications of a separation between prayers and other texts in a manuscript are comparatively rare. One unusual example is the rubric *incipit orationes peculiares* in a manuscript copied in northern Italy around the year 1000.[6] Although this rubric apparently refers to "private" prayers, which would seem to distinguish between one set of prayers and other texts in the same book, no other aspect

[2] For a recent study of *De psalmorum usu* and related texts see Jonathan Black, "Psalm Uses in Carolingian Prayerbooks: Alcuin and the Preface to *De psalmorum usu*," *Mediaeval Studies* 64 (2002), 1–60.

[3] *Precum Libelli Quattuor*, pp. 5–6.

[4] *Aelfwine's Prayerbook* (*London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xxvi + xxvii*), ed. Beate Günzel, Henry Bradshaw Society 108 (London, 1993); *A Durham Book of Devotions*, ed. Thomas H. Bestul, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts 18 (Toronto, 1987); *A Pre-Conquest English Prayer-Book*, ed. B. Muir, Henry Bradshaw Society 103 (Woodbridge, 1988).

[5] André Wilmart, "Pour les prières de dévotion," in his *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen Age latin: Études d'histoire littéraire* (Paris, 1932), 13: "La prière liturgique et la prière privée sont des espèces distinctes."

[6] London, British Library, MS Egerton 3763, fol. 51v.

of the manuscript supports such a distinction; many of the prayers later in the manuscript are associated with liturgical ceremonies (such as the blessing of the Paschal lamb). Further complicating the issue is the debate over the origins and ownership of the book, with some scholars arguing that it was prepared for an archbishop and others positing monastic patronage.[7] In general, prayers from the *libellus precum* tradition are combined with prayers for the communal liturgy, calling into question any notion of a consistent division between "private" and liturgical prayer.[8]

Following the tradition initiated by Wilmart, much scholarship on prayer has separated prayers from their manuscript contexts, focusing on the prayers themselves.[9] For instance, a recent edition of the pseudo-Anselmian corpus privileges individual texts rather than manuscript transmission.[10] However, some historians have moved beyond the pure analysis of texts, understanding textual relationships between prayerbooks as indicating connections between the institutions that produced them.[11]

Another major tendency in the study of *libelli precum* has been the reflex to classify them all as "Carolingian," in part because of Wilmart's longstanding influence in this area. Without a complete survey of all the texts in *libelli precum*, scholars have not yet differentiated sufficiently between the Carolingian texts and the later ones in the same manuscripts. Although prayers from the Carolingian period continued to be copied for centuries, many new texts were written in the central Middle Ages; some of these prayers reflect developments in monasticism during the tenth and eleventh centuries, and some can be associated with

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[7] D. H. Turner, "The Prayerbook of Archbishop Arnulph II of Milan," *Revue bénédictine* 70 (1960), 360–92; Odilo Heiming, "Ein benediktinisch-ambrosianisches Gebetbuch des frühen 11. Jahrhunderts: Brit. Mus. Egerton 3763 (ehemals Dyson Perrins 48)," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 8 (1964), 325–435.

[8] For more on this point see Susan Boynton, "Prayer as Liturgical Performance in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Monastic Psalters," *Speculum* 82 (2007), 896–931.

[9] An exception is Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Before the Book of Hours: The Development of the Illustrated Prayer Book in Germany," in Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York, 1998), pp. 149–95.

[10] Jean-François Cottier, *Anima mea*: *Prières privées et textes de dévotion du moyen âge latin, XIe–XIIe siècles: Autour des* Prières ou Méditations *attribuées saint Anselme de Cantorbéry* (Turnhout, 2001).

[11] Mariano Dell'Omo, "Il più antico libellus precum in scrittura beneventana (Cod. Casin. 575, già Misc.T.XLV). Un testimone di rapporti tra Nonantola e Montecassino nel secolo IX," *Revue bénédictine* 113 (2003), 235–84.

their places of origin. Some prayers seem to have been composed in specific monasteries, while others circulated widely with variants that linked the prayer to communities' liturgical uses.[12]

The widespread assumption that all prayers in *libelli precum* date from the ninth century was perpetuated by the lists and inventories of manuscripts published by Pierre Salmon in the 1970s. Salmon compiled lists of *libelli precum* preserved in Wilmart's unpublished notes, supplementing them with his own lists and inventories based on the research for his catalogue of liturgical manuscripts in the Vatican Library.[13] Although Salmon's publications referred to nearly all the texts in these manuscripts as "Carolingian prayers," the majority of the manuscripts themselves are from the tenth through twelfth centuries and they include prayers from the Carolingian textual tradition alongside later ones. In an inventory of the prayers in several Vatican manuscripts that he published in 1974, Salmon presented *libelli precum* more broadly as a manuscript tradition spanning several centuries.[14] This inventory provides an invaluable basis for comparison. In his first publication of Wilmart's lists, however, Salmon noted that of the 189 manuscripts he called "prayerbooks from the Carolingian period," only 54 were actually produced in the eighth and ninth centuries; he stated that 105 were copied in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, leaving 30 from the tenth century.[15] The implication was that the *libelli* were the textual collections themselves rather than the manuscript witnesses to the prayers.

Furthermore, Salmon pointed out that the texts he designated (purely for the sake of convenience, he noted) as "Carolingian prayers" actually appeared under many different rubrics and were transmitted in various genres of liturgical books. Upon some reflection he decided to list them by city and library rather than grouping them by manuscript type.[16] Both Salmon and Wilmart used the term *libelli precum* for a wide range of collections; some of the manuscripts in the list contained as few as

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[12] See, for example, Susan Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity: Liturgy and History at the Imperial Abbey of Farfa, 1000–1125* (Ithaca, 2006), pp. 92–98.

[13] "Livrets de prières de l'époque carolingienne," *Revue bénédictine* 88 (1976), 218–34; "Livrets de prières de l'époque carolingienne. Nouvelle liste de manuscrits," *Revue bénédictine* 90 (1980), 147–49; "Libelli precum du VIIIe au XIIe siècle," in *Analecta liturgica. Extraits des manuscrits liturgiques de la Bibliothèque Vaticane: Contribution à l'histoire de la prière chrétienne*, Studi e testi 273 (Vatican City, 1974), pp. 123–94.

[14] "Libelli precum du VIIIe au XIIe siècle."

[15] Salmon, "Livrets de prière," 223. These numbers must be approximate because Salmon gives many dates that cross two centuries ("ninth or tenth century," "tenth or eleventh century," "tenth-eleventh centuries").

[16] Salmon, "Livrets de prière," 220–22.

one or two texts they identified as Carolingian prayers, while others had as many as forty. Salmon excluded psalmodic prayers, which he considered a genre extraneous to the *libelli precum* tradition. Salmon's explanation of his method shows clearly why the published manuscript lists tend to obscure the most striking aspect of *libelli precum* from the central Middle Ages: their sheer diversity. Not only do the order and selection of prayers vary widely, but also the quantity of texts in each collection and their placement within the manuscript. Table 1, a synoptic listing of prayers in four Psalters produced at the central Italian abbey Farfa in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, provides just one example of the complex correspondences and divergences that occur even between manuscripts that are closely related in time and place.[17]

Table 1

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
			Gloriosa et immaculata
			Omnipotens sempiterne
			Deus inaestimabilis misericordia
			Redemptor mundi et illuminator
			Confessio omnium uitiorum
			Deus iustorum gloria

[17] It should be noted that Table 1 does not represent the manuscript order of all the prayers; only the texts from the manuscript in the first column are in their manuscript order. The table is organized in rough chronological order from left to right, but other arrangements could have been equally satisfactory. The four manuscripts are BAV Vat. lat. Chigi C.VI.177 (ca. 1050–1060), Farfa, Abbazia A.209 (ca. 1100), Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale August I 17 (ca. 1100), and Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale, Farfa 4 (early twelfth century).

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
	Deus omnipotens pater det filius		
	Exaudi me domine ihesu christe		
	Omnipotens deus redemptor mundi		
	Deus uiuorum et saluator omnium		
	Domine sancte pater omnipotens		
	Domine deus omnipotens qui es pius		
Omnipotens et misericors deus clementiam tuam	*		
Liberator animarum mundi redemptor domine Deus	*	*	
		Veniam et pietatem misericordiam	
Immensam pietatem tuam deprecor	*		
Tuam domine clementiam deprecor		*	

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
Domine deus omnipotens creator celi et terre	*	*	
		Domine deus omnipotens creator generis humani	
		Suscipere digneris domine deus	
Omnipotens et misericors deus cui omnia subiecta	*		
Domine deus omnipotens eterne et ineffabilis			*
Domine deus pater omnipotens qui consubstantialem		*	*
Domine ihesu christe fili dei uiui qui es uerus	*	*	*
Domine sancte spiritus deus omnipotens	*	*	*
Domine ihesu christi gloriossissime conditor mundi			*
Domine ihesu christe adoro te in cruce pendentem	*		

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
Domine ihesu christe adoro te in crucem uulneratum	*		
Domine ihesu christe adoro te in sepulchro iacentem	*		
Tuam crucem adoro domine	*		
Crux mihi salus est, crux mihi defensio	*		
Benedic me domine ihesu christe tua magna			
Domine ihesu christe uexillum sancte crucis tue adoro	*		
Domine ihesu christe qui celum et terram fecisti			
Ingeniti patris unigenite christe			
Domine ihesu christe qui hora diei tertia ad lignum			
Domine ihesu christe filius dei uiui qui regnas			
Domine deus te credo omnipotentem inuisibilem			

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
Precor uos sancti angeli et archangeli	Obsecro uos sanctissimi archangeli	Obsecro uos sanctissimi	Obsecro uos sanctissimi
Veniam et pietatem misericordiam et indulgentiam			
Te supplico uirgo sancta mater	*	*	*
Te sancta dei genitrix uirgo maria			O beata dei genitrix uirgo
Sancte michahel archangele domini mei ihesu	*		*
			Precor te princeps egregie
			Auxiliare michi obsecro
Beate michahel princeps celestis militie			
Precor te et suppliciter rogo spiritus angelicis numinis	Queso te et obsequenter rogo sancte	Queso te et obsequenter	Queso te et et obsequenter
Vos omnes chori celestium spiritum			
Beatissime iohannes baptista precursor et martyr	*		

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
Beate petre princeps apostolorum pastor et nutritor	Sancte petre apostole electe dei	Sancte petre apostole electe	Sancte petre apostole
Beate paule uas electionis quem ihesus christus	* (Beatissime paule…)		Beatissime bariona primari
Oro te sancte andrea beatissime apostole et martyr	*		
	Sancte iohannes apostole et euangelista		
	Sancte iacobe apostole dilecti frater		
Lumina mundi apostoli domini mei ihesu christi	* (Sanctissimi apostoli domini….)	* (Sanctissimi apostoli…)	
Obsecro te beate stephane leuita et protomartyr christi	*	*	
	Beatissime laurenti leuita		
	Sancti martyres gloriosi		
Beate martine confessor et sacerdos domini	* (Beatissime martine confessor…)		
Obsecro te beate benedicte dilecte dei intercede	*	*	

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
Obsecro uos beatissimi confessores christi	*	*	
		Omnes sancti martyres	
	Sancte uirgines christi agnes, agathe	Omnes sancte uirgines gloriosae	
Ne reputes piissime domine peccata			
Pie et exaudibilis domine ihesu christi clementiam			
Pie et exaudibilis domine ihesu christe exaudi me			
Deus omnium conditor qui paterna prelate omnium			
	Domine ihesu christe mane cum surrexero		
		Domine exaudi orationem meam	
			Benedictum dictum est
			Dominator domine deus omnipotens
			Sana me domine et sanabor

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Vatican City, BAV Chigi C.VI. 177, 113v–120v	*Farfa, Abbazia A. 209, 125r–130v*	*Perugia, BC, I 17, 123r–129v*	*Rome, BN Farfa 4, 50–88r*
			Benedictus es domine deus patrum
			Confiteor tibi ihesu christe

The table does not include the *ordo* for the Adoration of the Cross that concludes the *libellus precum* in Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale, Farfa 4; see Appendix 2.

Thus, comparing the contents of several different *libelli precum* can be revealing to a point, but to attain meaningful results one would need to compare data from at least several dozen manuscripts that were produced in different places over the course of several centuries.

As in later prayerbooks, such as the books of hours from the later Middle Ages, many factors must have contributed to the choice and organization of prayers in *libelli precum*.[18] In addition to widely transmitted (and thus presumably readily available) texts and existing models for such compilations, the personal affinities of scribes and patrons may well have played an important role. Most of the extant *libelli precum* come from monastic communities and seem, at least in part, to incorporate particular traditions of ritual and commemoration. Even prayers that are common to many different manuscripts often appear with significant variants, suggesting that monasteries altered the texts to reflect their own uses. Thus each *libellus precum* represents both an integral part of a broader textual corpus and a historically specific collection with implications for understanding the life of the community from which it emanated and the individuals who used it.

This observation leads us to the third major aspect of the *libelli precum* that has been absent from most of the scholarly literature, namely their practical use—including consideration of questions such as who owned the books themselves and how the texts were performed. The few studies that confront these issues have addressed both the manuscript

[18] For introductions to books of hours, see Victor Leroquais, *Les Livres d'Heures Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1927); Roger Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York and Baltimore, 1988) and idem, *Painted Prayers. The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York, 1997).

context and historical context of prayers, while providing a thorough account of the entire contents of a manuscript. Pierre Salmon's analysis of an eleventh-century manuscript from a monastery in Rome situated its texts within the widely-diffused textual traditions of *libelli precum*, as well as suggesting the significance of the manuscript for understanding the life of a modest Benedictine institution during the Gregorian reform. Salmon concluded that prayerbooks are important sources for monastic history.[19]

Whereas most studies of *libelli precum* focus on monastic books, Sarah Hamilton has examined the prayerbook made for Otto III near the end of the tenth century as a source of insight into the clerical construction of Ottonian kingship.[20] This manuscript, like many *libelli precum*, comprises a unique configuration of texts, but fits squarely into the longstanding pattern of clergy attempting to shape the religious experience of a royal elite. The guidance of the Germanic kings by clerics was established earlier in Alcuin's role as religious counselor to Charlemagne, a relationship which produced its own manuscript tradition of *libelli precum*.[21] As Hamilton notes, the manuscript from Tours that contains one of the four *libelli precum* edited by Wilmart includes both a prayer collection and a mirror for princes, showing the connection between devotional instruction and the construction of the royal image.[22] Hamilton points out how difficult it is to determine who used a book and how it was used; a strict division between private and liturgical prayer is often assumed, but difficult to demonstrate conclusively.[23]

Most recently, close examination of individual texts in their manuscript context and in the framework of the liturgy has led scholars to speculate about the performative aspect of prayers. The creative use of existing prayer texts as structural and thematic models for the act

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[19] Pierre Salmon, "La composition d'un *libellus precum* à l'époque de la réforme grégorienne," *Benedictina* 26 (1979), 285–322.

[20] Sarah Hamilton, "'Most illustrious king of kings'. Evidence for Ottonian kingship in the Otto III Prayerbook (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 30111)," *Journal of Medieval History* 27 (2001), 257–88.

[21] See Stephan Waldhoff, *Alcuins Gebetbuch für Karl den Großen: Seine Rekonstruktion und seine Stellung in der frühmittelalterlichen Geschichte der libelli precum*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 89 (Münster, 2003).

[22] Troyes Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 1742. Hamilton, "'Most illustrious,'" 260; Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 146.

[23] Hamilton, "'Most illustrious,'" 268–69; see also Boynton, "Prayer as Liturgical Performance."

of prayer has been suggested persuasively by Rachel Fulton.[24] Another dimension of prayer that deserves further attention is its connection with liturgical performance.[25] Many prayer texts in *libelli precum* of the central Middle Ages are introduced by rubrics that clearly associate the prayers with singing. In some cases, the prayers themselves are clearly meant to be sung. For example, a lengthy prayer that was attributed to Gregory the Great in the Middle Ages is introduced in a thirteenth-century Psalter by the rubric "Here begins the prayer of Saint Gregory the Pope, which one must sing for one's soul before the altar with thirty psalms of penitence."[26] The eleventh-century Roman *libellus precum* described by Salmon introduces a prayer with the recommendation that it be sung daily for the remission of sins.[27] Some rubrics in the same manuscript list the psalms that are to be sung after a prayer, while others identify prayers as preceding or following psalmody.[28] The prayers accompanied by such rubrics often refer to the salvific effects of singing, both for the singer and for others on whose behalf the prayer is accomplished. One of the many examples that could be cited is the conclusion of the prayer "Exaudi me domine" in a Psalter produced around 1100 at the abbey of Farfa: "so that the psalms which I have sung for my sins and for the salvation of your servants [male and female] may provide us with a remedy, with your mercy granting it, lest we experience eternal damnation in the future."[29]

One of the many prayers associated with psalmody in *libelli precum* describes the commemorative character of psalmody and its association

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[24] Rachel Fulton, "Praying with Anselm at Admont: A Meditation on Practice," *Speculum* 81 (2006), 700–33.

[25] For a fuller treatment of this point, see Boynton, "Prayer as Liturgical Performance."

[26] "Incipit oratio sancti Gregorii Pape quam homo debet cantare ante altare pro anima sua cum XXX psalmi penitentie," rubric introducing "Domine exaudi orationem," quoted in Joseph Lemarié, "Le 'Libellus precum' du Psautier de Saint-Michel de Marturi, Florence, Bibl. Laurenz. Codd. Plut XVII.3 et Plut. XVII.6," *Studi medievali* 3rd ser. 22 (1981), 871–906, at 883.

[27] Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigi C.VI.173, fol. 40r: "Oratio sancti prandiani quam si quis cantauerit cotidie multum ualet ad redimendam peccatae et ad uitam obtinendam sempiternam: Deus omnipotens pater et filius et spiritus sanctus…"

[28] Psalms to be sung after a prayer are listed in Chigi C.VI.173, fol. 42r–v; "Oratio quando precantet" is the rubric for the prayer "Liberator animarum" (fol. 90v); "Consumatio psalmodie" is the rubric for the prayer "Deus pie et exaudibilis" (fol. 91r), to be discussed below; and the prayer "Domine deus omnipotens" is described as "Oratio post psalmos atque missas" (fol. 92r).

[29] Farfa, Archivio dell'Abbazia, A.209, fol. 125r: "Ut psalmi quos pro peccatis meis et pro salute famulorum famularumque tuarum decantaui, tua misericordia donante, nobis prosint ad medelam et ne in futuro dampnationem sentiamus aeternam."

with intercession. In the Roman manuscript described by Salmon it is preceded by the rubric *consummatio psalmodiae*, referring to psalmody just completed:

> Holy God to be obeyed, merciful and kind, graciously receive these psalms through the intercession of the blessed and ever glorious Virgin Mary and of Saint Martin and of Saint Remigius, as well as of Saint Benedict and all your saints, and free me from all evil by means of their intercession, and make me worthy to be heard on behalf of those for whom I beseech your clemency. Have mercy upon all governors of churches who labor for your holy name, and all those of both sexes dedicated to God, so that they may forever persevere righteously and uprightly in your service. May your righteousness come to the aid of those who are your male and female servants and all those of the Christian people, living and dead, who have left this life in your name, and every congregation of servants and handmaidens of God. Appease, Lord, those who commemorate me, and have commended themselves to my unworthy prayers, or who have devoted some work or charity of devotion to me. Have mercy, Lord, on those who are close to me in blood or by the emotion of compassion, and all those for whom I am obliged to pray either willingly, or constrained by some vow, or for all those for whom until now I was unwilling to work, and neglected to pray. Free me, most holy God, and those whose names I especially name here, or whose names I mention in community, from all the evils in this world, and deign to keep us unharmed in your holy service and grant us your holy angel as a guardian and future defense here and everywhere; grant that we, along with all the deceased faithful, may deserve to receive eternal rewards from you, through your unique son, our Lord Jesus Christ, mediator of God and men and redemptor of the world, who lives with you and rules in the unity of the Holy Spirit.[30]

[30] BAV Chigi C.VI.173, fol. 92r; text from Salmon, "La composition d'un libellus precum," 318: "Deus pie et exaudibilis, clemens et benignus, suscipe propitius hos psalmos per intercessionem beatae et gloriosae semper Virginis Mariae sanctique Martini ac sancti Remigii, necnon sancti Benedicti et omnium sanctorum tuorum, et libera me ab omnibus malis per eorum intercessionem et fac me dignum exaudiri pro omnibus pro quibus tuam clementiam exoro. Miserere itaque omnibus rectoribus ecclesiarum, qui pro tuo sancto nomine laborant, et omnibus Deo dicatis utriusque sexus, ut iugiter in tuo servitio iuste et recte perseverent. Subveniat, Domine, pietas tua vel famulis et famulabus tuis illis simulque omnibus populo christiano, vivis et defunctis, quicumque in tuo nomine de hac vita migraverunt, et omni congregationi servorum et ancillarum Dei; propitiare, Domine, omnibus qui mei memoriam faciunt et se meis indignis orationibus commendaverunt, seu qui mihi aliquod caritatis vel pietatis officium impenderunt. Miserere, Deus, horum qui mihi consanguinitate sive compassionis affectu propinqui sunt et omnium pro quibus te rogandi debitor sum spontaneus, sive aliquo voto constrictus, sive pro quibuscumque mihi hactenus invitum esse laborare et neglexi. Me itaque, piissime Deus, et hos quorum nomina hic specialiter nomino, vel quorum in communi mentionem facio, ab omnibus nos in hoc saeculo insidiis libera et in tuo sancto servitio conservare digneris illaesos angelumque tuum sanctum nobis hic et ubique custodem et defensorem tribue et futurum; simul cum defunctis fidelibus

This text signals the close relationship between intercessory prayer and the commemoration of the dead, both processes that were realized in monasteries through the performance of psalmody.[31] The psalms that have just been sung are understood as an offering on behalf of those on whose behalf the orant prays, a community of beneficiaries that includes both secular and regular clergy as well as the orant's own friends and relatives. A prayer such as this effectively conveys the dense network of relationships involved in much monastic prayer during the central Middle Ages.[32] The important role of commemorative psalmody in monasteries situates the prayers in *libelli precum* within the ritual context of the institutions that produced them.

The monastic context of *libelli precum*, and their potential uses in monastic communities, is clearest when prayer collections are considered alongside the other components of the manuscripts in which they are contained. By way of example, Appendix 1 provides a complete description of a Psalter, now in Perugia, that was copied at the abbey of Farfa around 1100 (Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta I 17). In addition to the usual contents of a Psalter (psalms, canticles, prayers such as the Our Father and the Athanasian Creed, and litany) this book contains an *ordo* for penitence, computus, a compound text on calculation and counting, instructions for singing the psalms in groups of ten, and a *libellus precum*.[33]

The contents of this manuscript demonstrate the varieties of monastic prayer. Several prayers in the *libelli precum* are closely linked to the Psalter through references to psalmody just performed. The penitential *ordo* includes prayers and psalms, and the instructions for singing the psalms form a directive for yet another kind of prayer. The psalms themselves were viewed as a form of prayer both because of their performance

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universis, dona ut a te praemia consequi mereamur aeterna, per unicum Filium tuum Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, mediatorem Dei et hominum et redemptorem mundi, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti." In Salmon's transcription I have emended *invictum* (which he noted was a corrupt text) to *invitum*.

[31] On monastic commemoration of the dead see particularly Dominique Iogna-Prat, "The Dead in the Celestial Bookkeeping of the Cluniac Monks Around the Year 1000," in *Debating the Middle Ages*, ed. Lester Little and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Malden and Oxford, 1998), pp. 340–62; Megan McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints: Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, 1994).

[32] On this aspect of monastic prayer see most recently Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, pp. 144–48.

[33] On the instructions for psalmody by decades see Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, pp. 87–88.

in the liturgy and also through their typological interpretation, as seen in the *tituli psalmorum* transcribed in the appendix.

Appendix 2 presents a description of another Psalter, also copied at the abbey of Farfa at the beginning of the twelfth century (Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale, Farfa 4). This book is simpler than the manuscript described in Appendix 1; it consists essentially of a Psalter (now incomplete), a prayer collection, and a hymnary. As can be seen in Table 1, the *libellus precum* in Farfa 4 is more extensive and diverse than the one in the psalter described in Appendix 1. Several of the texts are apparently unique. The collection begins with a series of Marian prayers (perhaps reflecting the dedication of Farfa to the Virgin Mary) and concludes with an *ordo* for the Adoration of the Cross (on Good Friday or at other times) that is unique in its configuration, although it draws upon elements widely transmitted in other manuscripts.[34] The ritual structure and rubrics of the Adoration *ordo* in Farfa 4, like the references to psalmody in Perugia I 17, remind us of the ever-present liturgical context of prayer collections from the central Middle Ages. Placing *libelli precum* in their manuscript and performative context offers insight both into the texts of the individual prayers and the meaning of these collections for their medieval users.

[34] The entire series was edited by Wilmart in "Prières médiévales," 33–40. For recent discussions of this *ordo* in liturgical and historical context see Boynton, "Prayer as Liturgical Performance," 916–17; *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, 99–100.

APPENDIX ONE

Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, ms. I 17[35]
121 folios. There were 129 folios in the original foliation, of which fols. 9–16 are now lacking.

Collation: I–IV^{8}, V^{4+1}, VI^{4}, VII–XVI^{8}; one bifolium (fols. 41–42) is bound out of place between fols. 47 and 48.

The first leaf, heavily worn and darkened on the recto, seems to have been a flyleaf pasted to a binding, and later detached. The leaf was mounted and sewn into the manuscript in a modern restoration. An undetermined number of leaves are missing at the beginning of the manuscript. Gathering V consists of an original bifolium around a 15th-century replacement bifolium. After the replacement bifolium, a half-leaf completing the text was sewn in mounted on a languette.

According to 18th-century annotations in the manuscript, an entire quaternion (containing the calendar) is missing between the present first and second gatherings; the foliation there skips from 8 to 17.

Dimensions of page: 177 × 123 mm.

Ruling: with a drypoint, on the hair side. One column in 26 lines. Ruled space: ca. 125 × 75 mm.

Script: late Carolingian minuscule. Uses both ampersand and Tironian et. According to Supino Martini, the manuscript was copied by one hand (except for fol. 1r and fols. 7v–8v) of the early twelfth century.

Musical notation: on fol. 1r only, Latian neumes oriented around drypoint lines with a C clef and custos.

Decoration: Minor initials are of two types: outlined in red, painted gold, and enclosed in frames of green and whitish-blue, or zoomorphic shapes executed in gold, on a discontinuous background of green and blue. The major initials for the divisions of the psalter are painted in gold, divided into fillets, and intertwined with gold leafy interlace on a discontinuous background of blue and green. The Beatus initial (fol. 25v) is executed in reserve, the shaft divided into fillets, and intertwined with vegetal strapwork also in reserve on a discontinuous background of green, gold, blue, and violet. The golden frame of the letter is divided

[35] See also the description by Alessandro Bellucci in G. Mazzatinti, *Inventari dei Manoscritti delle Biblioteche d'Italia*, vol. V (Forlì, 1895), 165.

into compartments, filled with vegetal interlace (terminating in leafy sprays or acanthus-like fronds) on discontinuous background of blue and green. The lower compartment is inhabited by beasts and birds (also in reserve, outlined in red) forming the letters "eatus."

Contents

1r [Prayer to Virgin Mary] Ianua celi inclita MARIA, beatissima et uirgo puerpera. Electa ante secula uirga nostra facinora et uniuersa crimina, quo tibi deuotissime psallamus et purissima nutriores oculos nostros redde idoneos ad intuendum radium lumen qui manet maximum. Hymnus [Peter Damian]. Terrena cuncta iubilent astra laudibus monent uirginis inter thalamum uoces alternent tragmatum. (Notated with C clef and custos, and with drypoint lines serving as a staff for heighted neumes).

1v [*Ordo paenitentis*] *Cum uenerit aliquis ad sacerdotem petere penitentiam, dicat sacerdos hanc orationem genu flexo ante altarem uel in corde suo si in domo est.* Domine deus omnipotens propitius esto mihi peccatori, ut digne possim tibi gratias agere, qui me indignum et peccatorem propter tuam misericordiam ministrum fecisti ordinis sacerdotalis fungi et me exiguum humilemque mediatorem constituisti. Ad adorandum et intercedendum ad dominum nostrum ihesum christum pro peccantibus et ad penitentiam reuertentibus. Ideoque dominator domine qui omnes homines uis saluos fieri, et ad agnitionem ueritatis uenire, qui non uis mortem peccatoris set ut conuertatur et uiuat, suscipe orationem meam quam fundo ante conspectum clementiae tue pro peccatis meis, et pro hoc famulo tuo nomen qui uenit ad penitentiam, ut mundati delictis omnibus pura tibi in te prouiamus et ut des illi deus spiritum compunctionis ut resipiscat a diaboli laqueis quibus astrictus tenetur, et ad te per condignam satisfactionem reuertatur, et ad gaudia eterna peruenire mereat.[36]

Post hec sacerdos ueniat ad paenitentem cum tristitia, et lamentatione, et suspiriis, ac fletu, interroget eum dicens: Fili, uis accipere penitentiam de peccatis tuis?

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[36] *Le sacramentaire grégorien*, ed. Jean Deshusses, vol. III (Fribourg, 1982), number 3957; *North Italian Services of the eleventh century/Recueil d'ordines du XIe siècle*, ed. C. Lambot, Henry Bradshaw Society 67 (London, 1931), p. 35 (both lacking the last sentence of this text, from "ut mundati…mereat"). I am grateful to Sarah Hamilton for referring me to the volume edited by Lambot.

Et ille: Volo. *Interroget*: Fili, pro qua causa uenisti ad istam ecclesiam,[37] et ad me sacerdotem? *Respondeat*: Ego ueni pro peccatis meis penitentiam agere. *Interroget*: Vis ueram penitentiam agere? *Respondeat*: Volo. *Interroget*: Promittis mihi ueram emendationem? *Respondeat*: Sic facio. *Interroget*: Reddis te culpabilem deo de omnibus peccatis tuis, quotquot in hoc seculo fecisti et ut ad ea amplius non redeas. *Respondeat*: Sic facio.

Tunc accipit eum sacerdos in manu et ipse paenitens dicit tribus uicibus: In
2r manu tua domine commendo spiritum meum.[38]

Et sacerdos: Suscipiat omnipotens dominus penitentiam tuam et deprecationem meam, et ut te suscipio in manibus meis, sic te deus suscipiat in regnum suum et in requiem suam. *Interroget sacerdos*: Tamen uide fili ne alicui homini iram tenas, quia scriptum est quod odit fratrum suum homicida est. *Respondeat*: Non domine: Gratias ago deo omnipotenti.

Tunc dicit antiphonam: Suscepimus deus misericordiam tuam *usque* dextera tua. P. Magnus dominus. *Oratio*: Deus cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, intercedente beato petro apostolo tuo, suscipe deprecationem nostram, et hunc famulum tuum, nomen, ad confessionem et penitentiam tue pietatis inspiratione compunctum, quem delictorum catena constringi, miseratio tue pietatis absoluat.[39]

Tunc penitens ductus ante altarem et facta letania dicit: Pater noster. Et nomen.

Capitula: Ego dixi. Sana. Saluum fac seruuum Deus meus. Propitius esto peccatis nostris propter nomen tuum. Ne quando. Conuertere deus aliquando. Et deprecor. Domine exaudi orationem. Et domine. Exurge domine.

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[37] Adriaan Gaastra kindly pointed out to me that this question appears elsewhere only in the thirteenth-century Roman pontifical: see *Le pontifical Romain au Moyen-Age*, II: *Le pontifical de la curie romaine au XIIIe siècle*, ed. M. Andrieu, Studi e testi 87 (Vatican City, 1940), p. 480 (where it begins "Frater" rather than "Fili").

[38] In personal correspondence, Adriaan Gaastra and Sarah Hamilton both noted the similarity between this portion of the text and the thirteenth-century Roman pontifical (see *Le pontifical de la curie romaine*, p. 480). Gaastra added that the formulary appears with the immediately following prayer "Suscipiat omnipotens dominus" in many central Italian texts, and with the antiphon "Suscepimus deus" in some North Italian *ordines*. See Adriaan Gaastra, "Between Liturgy and Canon Law: A Study of Books of Confession and Penance in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Italy," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utrecht, 2007 (chapter 6). I am exceedingly grateful to Dr. Gaastra for his detailed comments on this *ordo*.

[39] This is textually identical to part of the "ordo penitentis" in the southern Italian rituale (Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana C 32) ed. Ambrose Odermatt, *Ein Rituale in Beneventanischer Schrift: Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Cod. C 32, Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts* (Fribourg, 1980), p. 285, numbers 115, 117. Cf. the text in *Le Pontifical romano-germanique du Xème siècle*, ed. Cyrille Vogel and Reinhard Elze, vol. II, pp. 234–45.

Oratio: Exaudi domine supplicum preces et confitentium tibi parce peccatis ut famulum tuum, nomen, quem conscientiae sue reatus accusat, indulgentia tue miserationis absoluat.[40]

Sequitur psalmus si infirmus est: Domine ne in ira tua. Sinaum iste. Domine ne intres. *Usque* lumen oculorum meorum. Gloria patri. Kyrie. Pater noster.

Capitulum: Domine autem faciem tuam a peccatis meis. Et omnes iniquitates.

Oratio: Deus misericors, deus clemens, deus indulgentie, deus pietatis et pacis, qui amore hominum homo factus es in similitudinem carnis
2v peccati, qui latroni confitenti in cruce manum porrexisti, qui chananeam et publicanum uocasti ad penitentiam conuertere dignare hoc famulum tuum, nomen, qui ante tuum altare suum confitetur reatum, et humilem se recognoscit, et facinorum omnium sibi ueniam petit. Presta et da ei spatium penitentiae, et quod factum est dele, et iniquam aliud facere permittas.

Sequitur psalmus. Miserere mihi deus secundum, usque iniquitates meas dele. Gloria patri. Kyrie. Pater noster.

Capitulum: Domine non secundum peccata nostra fac.

Oratio: Deus qui omnium tibi confitentium corda purificas, et accusantes sibi suam conscientiam ab omni uinculo iniquitatis absoluis. Dans indulgentiam captiuis, et medicinam tribuens uulneratis. Quesumus ut hunc famulum tuum, nomen, exclusa ab eo omni damnatione peccati, libera tibi mente concedas familiari.[41]

Sequitur psalmus. Deus in nomine tuo. Gloria. Kyrie. Pater.

Capitulum: Ne reminiscaris deus delicta nostra.

Oratio: Deus sub cuius oculo omne cor trepidat cuncte conscientie pauescunt. Propitiare famuli tui, nomen, gemitibus et cunctorum languorum eius medere uulneribus et sicut nemo nostrum est liber a culpa, ita nemo sit alienus ad uenia.[42] Psalmus: Misera mihi deus misera mihi. Gloria. Kyrie. Pater.

Capitulum: Domine ne memineris iniquitates nostras. Cito.

Domine deus noster qui offensione nostra non uinceris sed satisfactione placaris, Respice propitius super hoc famulum tuum, nomen,

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[40] *Ein Rituale in Beneventanischer Schrift*, p. 288, number 121; *Le sacramentaire grégorien*, I, (Fribourg, 1979, second edition), number p. 451, number 1379.

[41] *Ein Rituale in Beneventanischer Schrift*, p. 289, number 121 (cf. *Le Pontifical Romano-*Germanique, p. 136, 4).

[42] *Le sacramentaire grégorien*, II (Fribourg, 1979), p. 160, number 2520.

3r qui se tibi peccasse grauiter confitetur. Tuum est deus absolutionem criminum dare, et ueniam relaxare peccantibus qui dixisti, Nolo morte peccatoris sed ut conuertatur et uiuat. Concede ergo huic famulo tuo, nomen, ut penitentie tibi excubias celebret, ut correctis actibus suis conferre sibi ad diem iudicii sempiterna gaudia gratuletur.[43] *Psalmus* Deus misereatur. Gloria. Pater.

Capitulum: Deus iustorum gloria, et misericordia. Illumina facient et [salus] peccatorum.

Da huic famulo tuo, nomen, plenam indulgentie ueniam, et penitentie locum exoratus indulge ut qui praeterita peccata deplouat, futura mala non sentiat, neque iam ulterius lugenda committat, dimitte ei deus omnia crimina, et in semitis eum iustitie placatus instaura, ut securus mereatur deinceps inter istos et bene meritos concurrere, et ad pacis eterne premia peruenire. Sequitur psalmus: Domine deus in adiutorium. Gloria. Pater [noster]. *Capitulum*: Ab occultis meis.

Oratio: Parce domine parce peccatis huius famuli tui, nomen, et *quamuis* incessabiliter delinquenti debeatur pena. Presta quesumus ut quod ad perpetuum meretur exitium transeat ad correctionis auxilium, et spatium penitentiae ei concede. Noli respicere peccata eius domine, sed tua magna misericordia eum reuoca. Delicta iuuentutis et ignorantias eius ne memineris domine, sed secundum magnam misericordiam tuam memento eius, et redime eum ex omnibus angustiis suis et permitte eum a te numquam separari.[44]

Sequitur psalmus: Benedic anima mea dominum. Usque renouabitur sicut. Gloria. Pater [noster]

Capitulum: Adiuua nos deus salutis. Et propter.

3v *Oratio*: Precamur deus clementiam tuam et magnam misericordiam maiestatis tue, ut famulo tuo, nomen, peccata et facinora confitenti ueniam relaxare, et preteritorum culpis redonare dignaris, qui humeris tuis ouem perditam reduxisti ad caulas, qui publicani precibus et confessione placatus es, tu etiam huic famulo tuo placari digneris domine, tu eius precibus benignus aspira, ut in confessione placabili permaneat fletus eius, et petitio eius perpetuam clementiam celeriter exoret, sanctisque altaribus et sacramentis restitutus spei rursus celesti, et eterne glorie mancipetur. *Psalmus*. Inclina domine. Gloria. Pater.

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[43] *Le sacramentaire grégorien*, I, number 1382 (p. 452); III, number 3954 (pp. 113–14), except for the phrase "Nolo morte peccatoris sed ut conuertatur et uiuat"; the Gregorian Sacramentary has "paenitentiam te malle peccatorum quam mortem."

[44] Cf. *Le sacramentaire grégorien* II, numbers 2485, 2489 (pp. 154–55).

Capitulum: Delicta iuuentutis et ignorantia. Secundum mag[nam misericordiam.]

Oratio: Petimus te domine deus conditor celi et terre ut ylari uultu respicere digneris super hunc famulum tuum, nomen, et omne uinculum peccatorum relaxari iubeas, quem hodie ad medicamentum penitentie peruenire fecisti. Da ei deus humilitatem perfectam, mansuetudine quietam, caritatem fraterna, tolerantiam corporis. Fac eum relinquere omnem concupiscentiam huius seculi, tibique soli deo pura mente et deuoto corde seruire concedas, quia tu dixisti, Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut conuertatur et uiuat. Libera domine famulum tuum a iudicio gehenne, et a laqueo diaboli, mitte angelum tuum sanctum protectorem, qui eum custodiat omnibus diebus uite sue.

Post surgens a terra, sacerdos blande leniterque interroget eum primo de fide qualiter credat, postea diligenter de singulis criminibus et peccatis. Esto deo
4r fidelis? *Respondeat*: Sum in quantum ille prestui mihi. *Interrogat*: Sic mihi qualiter tenes symbolum et orationem dominicam? Pater noster et credo in deum?

Quod si recte dixerit, bene sin autem, corripe eum. *Interroget*: Credis in deum patrem omnipotentem et filium et spiritum sanctum? *Respondeat*: Credo. *Interroget*: Credis quod iste tres persone quas dixi pater et filius et spiritus sanctus tres persone sunt et unus deus? *Respondeat*: Credo. *Interroget*: Credis quod in ista carne in qua nunc es in ipsa habes resurgere in die iudicii et recipere siue bonum siue malum quod gessisti in uita tua? *Respondeat*: Credo. *Interroget*: Habes uoluntatem emendare quicquid egisti contra deum? *Respondeat*: Habeo. *Interroget*: Habes fides quod possit tibi deus dimittere peccata tua, sicut uersus fueris, et ea confessus fueris? *Respondeat*: Habeo. *Interroget*:[45] Vis dimittere illis peccata ut diximus quicumque in te peccauerint, Domino dicente, sine remiseritis hominibus peccata eorum, nec pater noster celestis dimittet uobis peccata uestra? *Respondeat*: Volo.

Et si non uult dimittere salua sua lege, nec debes ei peniter dare, et si uult dimittere, tunc debet eum sacerdos iterum interrogare dicens: Vis ex toto corde tuam confessionem facere? *Respondeat*: Volo. *Interrogat*: Credis resurrectionem? *Respondeat*: Credo. *Interroget*: Recognoscis te culpabilem? Post baptismum de omnibus peccatis que gessisti sciendo uel nesciendo, commoraris

[45] From here to the end of the *ordo*, a comparable text appears in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana T.27 sup., in *North Italian Services of the Eleventh Century*, ed. Lambot, pp. 39–40 (ending with the word "Promitto"). I am grateful to Sarah Hamilton for calling my attention to this parallel.

aut recordaris, quod in uerbo aut in facto aut in cogitatione contra mandatum dei egisti? *Respondeat*. Recognosco. *Interrogat*: Promittis te de preteritis culpis emendare, et omnes inuentiones diaboli abrenuntiare? *Respondeat*: Promitto.

4v Aureae claues computi (computus table)

5r Argumentum ad septuagesimam et pasca inuendae (computus table)

5r–7r *De loquela digitorum*. De temporum ratione domino iuuante dicturi. Necessarium duximus utilissimam primo promptissimaque flexis digitorum paucis praemonstrare sollertiam. Ut cum maximam computandi facili-

5v–6r tatem dederimus… exprimit uirginitatis coronam. Cum ergo dicis…

7r Cum prima alfabeti litteram intimare superis. Unum digitum manus teneto. Cum secundam duos cum tertia trios et sic cetera ex ordine.[46]

Tres ergo digiti in sinistra manu id est Auricularis, Medicus, Impudicus usque ad nonum continent numerum. Duo digiti in sinistra manu, id est Index et Pollex, usque ad nonagesimum continet numerum. Duo dextera manum digiti, id est Pollex et Index continet usque ad nongentos. Tres in dextera manu digiti continet usque viiii. Id est Auricularis, Impudicus, Medicus. Continent in sinistra manu semper paratus usque nonaginta. Continet dextera manus per iuncturas usque ad dcccc.[47]

7v [instructions for singing the psalms] *Quisquis psalterium per decadas cantare disponis, hunc ordinem sollicita intentione custodi. Dic igitur in primis*. Deus in adiutorium meum intende cum Gloria et Kyrie Pater noster. Et ne nos. Kapitula Ego dixi deus misera mei. Conuertere deus aliquantulum. Fiat deus misericordia tua super nos. Domine exaudi orationem meam. Oratio: Domine deus omnipotens qui es omnium rerum principium cuius maiestas nullo fine concluditur nullaque uarietate fuscatur, incipiente me queso in tua laude psallere, propitius respice et presta mihi sine aliqua offensione omnes psalmos canere a primo usque ad nouissimum quatinus mihi uel his pro quibus cantantur magis ad remedium quam

[46] Bede, *De temporum ratione* I.1–85, ed. Theodore Mommsen and Charles W. Jones, CCM 123B (Turnhout, 1977), pp. 268–72, except for I.54–55 (tria millia…in laeua); 72–74; 77–82 (qua literis…diuinando deludens). There are numerous variants as well as the following unidentified insertion on fols. 5v–6r: "Nomina autem digitorum ueteres ita uocari uoluerunt: Pollex, Index, Impudicus, Medicus, Auricularis. Pollex namque dictus eo quod inter ceteros plus polleat. Index eo quod ipsum aliquid monstrando significamus uel indicamus. Impudicus eo quod plerique per eum proprie insectatio exprimitur. Medicus eo quod per ipsum medicinam exprimimus uel ubi dolor est tangimus. Auricularis eo quod per ipsum frequenter aurem scalpimus."

[47] Rabanus Maurus, *De Computo*, VI.4–15, ed. Wesley Stevens, CCCM 44 (Turnhout, 1979), pp. 210–11.

ad iudicium proficiant et ad beatitudinem quae primus retinet psalmus auide properando de uictoria hostium cum ultimi uersi fine laudem tibi referre spiritus meus ualeat. Prestante domino nostro iesu christo qui tecum et cum spiritu sancto uiuis et regnas deus per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

Deinde scire te conuenit quia de psalmis dauiticis quindecim decade complentur. Prima decadam ad honorem sancte trinitatis decanta. Secundam ad honorem sancte dei genitricis. Tertiam ad honorem sancte et uiuifice crucis. Quartam ad honorem sancti michahel et omnium angelorum. Quintam ad honorem omnium apostolorum. Sextam ad honorem omnium martirum. Septimam ad honorem omnium confessorum. Octauam ad honorem omnium sanctorum monachorum. Nonam ad honorem omnium sanctarum uirginum. Decimam ad honorem
8r omnium sanctorum. Undecima pro temet ipso decanta. Duodecimam pro patre et matre et fratribus ac sororibus atque omnibus parentibus tuis decanta. Tertiam decimam specialiter tam pro fidelibus amicis quae et familiaribus. Quintam decimam pro omnibus fidelibus defunctis. Hoc autem scire te conuenit quia una quaque decada decem psalmos habet et semper in finem decimi presi Gloria patri dicere debes, cum capitulo et orationibus ad eadem decadas pertinentibus. Finitis itaque quindecim si uolueris quasi recapitulando adiungere orationi tue ipsos quindecim inter cantica et hymnos et symbolum et fidem catholicam pro omnibus supradictis causis. Hoc ordine dicere poteris. Dicta infine gloria patri addatur breuis letania. Qua finita istas subiungatur communis oratio. *Oratio*. Pietate tua.

Ordo qualiter psalterium incipiatur. In primis. Domine labia mea aperies. Ter. Deus in adiutorium meum. Ter. Gloria patri. Kyrie. Christe. Kyrie. Pater noster. Credo in deum. *Oratio*. Benignus et misericors deus qui reuocas errantes et salutas penitentes medelam tribuis infirmantibus glorie coronam perseuerantibus exaudi me miserum et indignum famulum tuum. Non per os psalmos clementiam tuam inplorantem. Ut quicquid humiliter hic oro te, largiente adipisci merear. Domine sicut uis et sicut sanctis misera mihi. Amen Ter. Adiutorium nostrum in nomine domin. Ps. Beatus. Gloria. Quare. Gloria. Ps. Domine quod. Gloria Cum inuocat gloria. Verba mea. Gloria. Pater noster. Gloria.
8v Adiutorium nostrum in nomine domini. V. Qui fecit. Ps. Domine ne in iram. Semper per omnes V. ps. Pater noster cum gloria terminetur et sextus incipiatur cum adiutorium nostrum in nomine domini. In hoc modum usque Quicumque uultu cantetur cum tribus canticis qui inter iacent idem dominicalis aut temporalis.

Item qualiter per v. psalmos psalterium canatur. Deus in adiutorium meum intende. Deus ad adiuuandum me festina. Consolatio. Et reuerentia. Inimici mei. Adiutorium et protector meus esto deus meus ne moreris. Qui uulneratus est propter peccata nostra et resurrexit propter iustificationem nostram, ipse nobis nunc auxilium in tempore tribulationis miseratione solita largiatur ut cum sanctis eius exultantes eum magnificare atque extollere ualeamus. Pater noster, gloria patri. *Psalmus*. Beatus uir *usque* Domine in ira tua *primus*, gloria patri. Adiutorium nostrum. *Antiphona*. Te deum pater ingenitum te filium unigenitum te spiritum sanctum paraclitum sanctam et indiuiduam trinitatem, toto corde te ore confitemur laudem atque benedicimus tibi gloria in secula. Gloria tibi trinitas equalis una deitas et ante omnia secula et nunc et in perpetuum. Credo in deum. In te et nostra sit spes semper attenta tuos fluctus mitiga tu nos in tempationibus conserua. Tu nostra sitim tua contemplatione satia nos uultu tuo saluatoris uiuifica. Amen. Ps. Domine in iram. Usque. Saluum me fac domine quoniam defecit sanctus. Ita fac per totum psalterium.

17r–24v Computus

25r blank (a text added here in the later Middle Ages has faded)

25v Beatus initial

26r–113r Roman psalter (*tituli* transcribed below)

113r–120r Old and New Testament Canticles, Te Decet Laus, Te Deum and Gloria

120v–122v Pater noster, Apostles' Creed, Nicean Creed, Quicumque vult saluus esse (Athanasian *De Fide Catholica*)

122v–123r litany

123r–129v Prayer collection

123r. Omnipotens et misericors deus, clementiam tuam suppliciter deprecor ut me famulum tuum tibi fideliter seruire concedas. Et perseuerantiam bonam et felicem consumationem mihi largiri digneris, et hoc psalterium quod in conspectui tuo cantaui, ad salutem et remedium animæ meæ proficiat sempiternum. Per te ihesu christe saluator mundi.

123v *Post finitum psalterium* Liberator animarum mundi redemptor. Domine deus æternæ. Rex immortalis. Supplico ego peccator per immensam clementiam tuam te per magnam misericordiam tuam ut per modulationem psalmorum quam ego indignus et peccator decantaui, liberes animam meam de peccato et abstollas cor meum de omnibus paruis et perfidis cogitationibus. Libera domine animam meam et corpus meum de peccato et seruitute peccati. Repelle a me concupiscentias carnales. Libera me domine de omni inpedimento sathanæ et minis-

trorum eius. Visibilium et inuisibilium infidelium tuorum qui querunt animam meam.

124r *Alia oratio.* Veniam et pietatem misericordiam et indulgentiam. Rogo ego peccator piissime domine deus meus pro omnibus culpis meis, pro facto meo, pro cogitatione, pro locutione, pro pollutione, pro adulterio, pro fornicatione, pro fragilitate ac tepiditate, ut fiat domine misericordia tua super me. Quem ammodum spero in te; iniuste egi, iniquitatem feci. Tu qui pius pater es, parce mihi deus, parce malis meis, parce omnibus peccatis meis, priusquam moriar. Excita potentiam tuam et ueni ut saluum facias me. Domine deus uirtutum conuerte me et ostende faciem tuam et saluus ero. Per dominum nostrum ihesum christum.

Alia oratio. Tuam domine clementiam deprecor mihi peccatori famulo tuo per [h]os psalmos quos in conspectu diuinæ maiestatis tuæ decantaui. Remissionem cunctorum tribue, et omnibus pro quibus debitor sum exorare uiuis siue defunctis, misericordiæ tuæ munere inpendas. Quatenus ad æternam uitam perueniant, et tuæ ubique gratiæ dona percipere mereantur.

124v *Alia oratio.* Domine deus omnipotens creator cæli et terræ, exaudi propitius orationem meam. In qua ego peccator magnificentiam tuam rogo, per magnam misericordiam tuam, et per modulationem psalmorum, quos ego in conspectu tuo cantaui, petitionem meam, et concede mihi in presenti seculo uitam et sanitatem et spatium in uita ista ad pænitentiam agendam, et da mihi in futuro ueniam et indulgentiam et remissionem omnium peccatorum, et cum omnibus sanctis tuis uitam percipere sempiternam. Per.

Alia oratio. Omnipotens et misericors deus creator generis humani, propitius esto mihi indigno famulo tuo et peccatori. Quia si facta mea consideras, sanctissimi nominis tui inuocatione dignus non sum. Si uerba mea respicis ultra modum super omnes peccatores ante te reus appareo. Si conscientias meas discutis, omnino indignus cui misericordiam tuam impendas existo, sed quia misericordia tua peccata totius mundi exsuperat. Ideo confisus de tua pietate desperare me non presumo. Non enim habeo ubi confugium faciam, nisi ad te deum uiuum et uerum, in cuius manu multæ sunt miserationes. Quamuis uulneratus et grauatus omnibus malis, ad te clamo et ueniam a te expecto. Ut per hos psalmos quos ante conspectu diuinæ maiestatis tuæ decantaui, donare digneris indulgentiam meorum omnium delictorum piissime domine et omnibus parentibus meis uiuis et defunctis fidelibus ueniam et requiem sempiternam largire digneris. Per dominum nostrum ihesum.

Alia oratio. Suscipere digneris domine deus omnipotens istos psalmos consecratos, quos ego miser et infelix peccator cantaui in honore nominis

tui pro me peccatore, seu pro omnibus benefactoribus meis, et pro his qui se in meis orationibus commendauerim, atque pro omnibus christianis uiuis atque defunctis, concede domine ihesu christe ut isti psalmi nobis proficiant ad salutem et ad ueram penitentiam faciendam. Presta saluator mundi.

125r *Ad patrem oratio*. Domine deus pater omnipotens qui consubstantialem et coæternum tibi ante omnia secula ineffabiliter filium genuisti. Cumque quo atque cum spiritu sancto ex te eodemque filio procedente omnia quæcumque existunt uisibilia atque inuisibilia creasti. Te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico. Esto quæso propitius mihi peccatori et ne despicias me opus manuum tuarum, sed salua et adiuua me propter nomen sanctum tuum. Amen.

Ad filium oratio. Domine ihesu christe fili dei uiui qui es uerus et omnipotens deus. Splendor et imago patris, et uita eterna, cui una est cum patre sanctoque spiritu substantia æquus, honor, eademque gloria et coæterna maiestas. Te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico. Ne me obsecro perire patiaris, sed salua et adiuua me gratuito munere tuo, quem dignatus es redimere pretioso sanguine tuo. Amen.

125v *Ad spiritum sanctum oratio*. Domine sancte spiritus deus omnipotens qui coequalis coæternus et consubstantialis patri filioque existens, ab eis inenarrabiliter procedis, qui super eundem dominum nostrum ihesum christum in columbæ specie super omnes apostolos in linguis igneis descendisti. Te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico, depelle a me quæso tenebras totius iniquitatis et perfidiæ, et accende in me lumen tuæ misericordiæ, et ignem sanctissimi amoris tui. Amen.

Ad sanctam trinitatem. Domine deus omnipotens æternæ et ineffabilis sine fine atque initio, quem unum in trinitate, et trinum in unitate confitemur, te solo adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico trinitas sancta, tibi misericors et clemens gratia refero, qui me exutum noctæ perfidie et erroris participem fieri tribuisti gratiæ tuæ…[48]

Ad sanctam mariam oratio. Te supplico uirgo sancta mater christi immaculata puerpera grata maria, stella maris splendida regina cælorum digna, aula dei munda, porta christi conclusa, in mulieribus benedicta, super angelos exaltata. Genitrix christi. Te rogo ut apud dominum deumque tuum, immo apud filium tuum, pro peccatis meis interuenire digneris. Nullus est enim in creaturis dignior te, quia ipse qui creatuit te natus est ex te, et proinde nullum libentius exaudit quam te. Sub tuis

[48] For editions of this series of four prayers see PL 101.1399; Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 14–16, 139–40.

ergo uisceribus confugio sancta dei genitrix deprecationem meam ne despicias, sed libera me sola casta et benedicta. Admitte precem meam intra sacrarium tue exauditionis et reporta mihi gratiam reconciliationis. Sit per te excusabile quod per te ingero. Accipe quod offero, impetra quod rogo, excusa quod timeo, quia nec potentiorem meritis inuenio ad placandam iram iudicis quam te, quæ meruisti mater existere eiusdem redemptoris et iudicis. Sancta Maria succurre mihi misero, iuua pusillanimem, refoue debilem, ora pro me, sentiant omnes tuum iuamen, quicumque deuote cælebrant tuum sanctum nomen. Sit tibi compassio super me, sit pius affectus tuus super me peregrinum, et cum te laetantem semper aspicis. Fletus meos quæso ad deum ipsa admittas; eumque ut proprium filium tuum pro me interpelles, ut merear ad gaudia æterna peruenire. Amen.[49]

126v *Ad proprium angelum oratio*. Queso te et obsequenter rogo sancte angeli dei cui deus omnipotens dignatus est committere curam animæ meæ contra malignos angelos et iniquos uiros fer mihi potentem auxilium ne uel astutia frangant. Quæso et uires mihi tuis refoue precibus, auxiliante domino nostro ihesu christo.[50]

Ad omnes angelos oratio. Obsecro uos sanctissimi archangeli dei, sancte michahel, sancte gabrihel, sancte raphahel, sancta cherubym, sancta seraphym, qui non cessatis clamare nocte ac die dicentes, sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, dominus deus sabaoth qui est et qui erat et qui uenturus est. Intercedite pro me fragili et nimium peccatorem, ut liberet me omnipotens deus de omnibus legionibus demonum et de ebrietate, de elatione, de iactantia cordis, de superbia, de iracundia, de defensione audacie et liberet me omnipotens deus de alienatione mentis, det mihi sapientiam, fidem, spem et karitatem, ut totus integer, spiritus et corpus sine querela in aduentum domini nostri ihesu christi seruetur. Amen.

Ad sanctum Petrum apostolum oratio. Sancte petre apostole electe dei. Tu confessus es christum filium dei, super te ædificauit dominus æcclesiam suam. Tibi tradidit claues regni cælorum. Tibi dedit potestatem ligandi
127r atque soluendi et remittendi peccata. Tu es pastor ouium exemplar confessionis, exemplar pænitentiæ doctor æcclesiæ. Ianitor paradysi, adiutor electorum. Tu es susceptor animarum, et ego miser et peccator et fragilis, quod sum facturus cum uenero ad te, adiuua me, ut non recedam confusus propter uitia et peccata que male commisi, sed potius solue uincula peccatorum meorum, quoniam tu habes potestatem ligandi

[49] Ed. Barré, pp. 98–99, with variants from Rome, BN Farfa 4.
[50] Ed. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels*, p. 581, see also p. 551.

et soluendi in cælo et in terra. Sancte petre, et omnes sancti apostoli aperite mihi portas iustitie ut ingressus in eas. Confiteor domino. Amen.

Ad omnes apostolos oratio. Sanctissimi apostoli domini nostri ihesu christi. Beatissime petre, paule, andrea, iacobe, iohannes, iacobe, toma, phylippe, bartholomeæ, matheæ, symon, taddeæ, mathia, barnaba, luca, marce. Cum omnibus sanctis discipulis, discipulabisque domini mei ihesu christi. Orate pro me, ut abstraat me dominus a mundo sicut abstrauit uos, Et donet michi sequi uestigia sua, uel in extremo agmine uestro. Quod ipse prestare dignetur, qui uiuit et regnat cum domino patro et spiritu sancto in secula seculorum amen.

Ad sanctam stephanum. Oratio. Obsecro te beate stephane leuita, et protomartyr christi. Ora pro me ad dominum ihesum christum pro cuius amore confessionis primus suscepisti martyrium, et sicut donauit tibi patientiam inter ictus lapidum seruare, Et pro persecutoribus intercedere, concedat michi inter temptationis uerba esse patientem, et ex caritate pro fraternis exorare delictis, ut et ipse tuis meritis consequar misericordiam christi.

127v *Ad omnes sanctos martyres. Oratio*. Omnes sancti martires gloriosi qui fortes extitistis in certamine passionis, intercedite pro me indigno et miserrimo ut possim in presenti seculo ueraciter peccata mea plangere et ueram pænitentiam gerere de meis peccatis, omnibus diebus uitæ meæ. Obsecro te domine ihesu bone pastor misericordissime, et multæ miserationis et uerax, ut per eorum intercessionem, miserearis animæ meæ, et dimittas omnia peccata mea. Qui uiuis.

Ad sanctum benedictum. Oratio. Obsecro te beate benedicte dilecte dei intercede pro seruo tuo N una cum sanctissima scolastica sorore tua, et omni sancta hac congregatione tua, et pro uniuersis sub tuo magisterio militantibus simul et pro omni populo christiano. Intercede et

128r pro me misero seruo tuo, ut purget dominus cor meum, os meum, actus meos, a cunctis uitiis. Tribuat mihi seruare cuncta quæ precepit, et custodire sanctæ regulæ tue tramitem quam me seruaturum spopondi. Amen.

Ad omnes sanctos confessores Oratio. Obsecro uos omnes sancti beatissimi confessores christiani atque doctores Cypriane, Basili, Gregori, Ambrosi, Augustine, Hieronime, Leo, Iohannes, Ysidore, Benedicte. Dignamini intercedere pro me peccatore, ut concedat mihi dominus seruare que docuistis ut in uestro me faciat consortio gratulari. Amen.

Ad omnes sanctas uirgines. Oratio. Omnes sancte uirgines gloriose, quibus data est etiam in sexu fragili uictoria castitatis et martyrii. Obsecro te dominum nostrum pro me indigno peccatore et omnibus uitiis pleno

et circumsepto, ut per uestram intercessionem merear obtinere ueniam et misericordiam, quod pro meis meritis nullatenus possum. Saluator omnium ihesu, per earum intercessionem libera me, protege me, defende me, Salua me, Custodi me, atque illustra me lumine tuo sancto. Ne derelinquas me domine deus meus, Ne discesseris a me, Sed intende in adiutorium meum domine deus salutis meae, Qui uiuis et regnas.

128v–129v *Oratio Sancti Gregorii Papae.* Domine exaudi orationem meam quia iam cognosco quod tempus meum prope est… Te deprecor et supplico, ut exaudias deprecationem meam. Qui uiuis.[51]

Tituli Psalmorum[52]

ii. De conuentu fidelium in christi passione
iii. Cum fugeret a facie absalon filii sui
iv. Propheta increpat iudeos et manendo proximos
v. Pro ea que hereditatem consequetur
vi. Vox christi ad patrem
vii. Propheta dicit ad christum
viii. Vox ecclesie laudem dicit de christo et de fide omnium credentium
ix. Propheta dicit laudem de christo et de iudeis
x. vox christi ad patrem
xi. Christus pro passione sanctorum suorum dicit de iudeis ad patrem
xii. vox christi ad patrem
xiii. uox christi ad diuitem increpantem se et de populo iudaico
xiv. interpellat patrem. Vox christi quam dicit fidelibus
xv. In tituli inscriptione psalmus ipsi dauid
xvi. Vox christi in passionem siue eccesie in persecutione
xvii. Vox ecclesie.
xviii. In predicatione apostolorum et de aduentu christi
xix. De christo dicit propheta seu de ecclesia
xx. [no *titulus*]
xxi. Pro assumptione matutis cum pateretur christus dicit

[51] Ed. D. H. Turner, "The Prayer-Book of Archbishop Arnulph II of Milan," *Revue bénédictine* 70 (1960), 373–74, after the Milanese manuscript London, BL Egerton 3763.

[52] This series of *tituli* is loosely related to the modified series I edited by Salmon in "Les *Tituli psalmorum*, Nouvelles séries," in *Analecta Liturgica*, pp. 12–13; the correspondence with Chigi D.VI.79 is limited mainly to the first half of the psalter. Some psalms have no Christian *titulus*; in a few of these cases I have transcribed the Old Testament psalm title.

xxii.	Vox ecclesie post baptismum
xxiii.	Vox ecclesie
xxiv.	In persona ecclesie canitur conuersa ad deum
xxv.	Vox ecclesie iam perfecte et in christo stabilite
xxvi.	Priusquam liniretur ad eos qui primum ingrediuntur
xxvii.	Vox christi ad patrem in conflictu
xxviii.	In consummatione tabernaculi
xxix.	Propheta ad patrem et ad filium dicit
xxx.	Vox christi in passione
xxxi.	Vox penitentis post baptismum
xxxii.	Vox apostolorum credentes ad dei prouocantes laudem
xxxiii.	Vox cuiusdam iusti
xxxiv–xxxvi.	seem to be missing
xxxvii.	Vox ecclesiae quae in tribulationibus gemit
xxxviii.	Propheta increpat iudeos qui diuitias habent
xxxix.	Propheta cum laude dei populum ad[h]ortatur
xl.	Vox christi de passione sua. De iuda
xli.	Vox penitentium et desiderantium ad fontes lacrimarum
xlii.	Vox ecclesie orantis ut diuidatur ab infidelibus
xliii.	Propheta penitentiam agens pro populo iudaico
xliv.	Canticum pro dilecto
xlv.	Vox iustorum in tribulatione nichil timentium. Propheta de christo dicit.
xlvi.	Vox apostolorum ad gentes
xlvii.	Vox apostolorum vox ecclesiae laudantis deum
xlviii.	Hic diuites increpat qui mortui ad infernum descendunt. Vox ecclesiae
xlix.	De aduentu christi et dei iudicio futuro
l.	Vox penitentis
li.	Vox christi de iuda traditore
lii.	Propheta increpat iudeos et infideles
liii.	Vox supplicantis ad christum
liv.	Vox christi aduersus magnam turbam iudeorum
lv.	Vox ecclesiae contra persecutores
lvi.	Vox ecclesiae contra persecutores suos
lvii.	Vox ecclesiae ad iustitie regulam prouocantes
lviii.	Vox christi ad iudeos
lix.	Vox apostolorum in passione christi
lx.	Vox ecclesiae
lxi.	Vox ecclesiae et de christo

lxii. Voc ecclesie de christo
lxiii. Vox prophetae ex persona christi et in consequentibus de apostolis dicit.
lxiv. Vox apostolica de christo
lxv. Vox apostolica de christo
lxvi. Vox apostolorum
lxvii. Propheta annuntiat aduentum christi et adsumptione in celis
lxviii. Vox christi tempore passionis
lxix. Vox ecclesiae ad dominum
lxx. Vox christi ad patrem
lxxi. Vox ecclesiae. De christo ad patrem
lxxii. Hucusque secundus liber. Incipit liber tertius
lxxiii. Vox christi de iudeis ad patrem
lxxiv. Vox christi de iudicio futuro
lxxv. Vox ecclesiae ad christum
lxxvi. Vox christi ad patrem
lxxvii. Vox christi de iudeis
lxxviii. Vox martyrum
lxxix. Vox sacerdotum dei pro ecclesia ad christum
lxxx. Vox spiritus sancti ad populum
lxxxi. Vox ecclesiae de iudeis
lxxxii. Vox ecclesiae ad deum de iudeis
lxxxiii. Pro eis qui fidem sunt secuti
lxxxiv. Vox apostolica ad nouellum populum
lxxxv. Vox christi ad patrem
lxxxvi. Vox apostolica de ecclesia
lxxxvii. Vox christi de passione ad patrem
lxxxviii. Vox christi ad patrem de iudeis
lxxxix. Explicit liber tertius. Incipit liber quartus
xc. Vox ecclesiae ad christum
xci. [no *titulus*]
xcii. Vox ecclesiae de regno christi
xciii. Vox ecclesiae ad deum de iudeis
xciv. Vox ecclesiae ad deum de iudeis
xcv. Vox ecclesiae laudantis
xcvi. Vox ecclesiae de aduentu domini
xcvii. Vox ecclesiae ad apostolos de christo
xcviii. De ligno christi. Vox apostolorum ad populum
xcix. Vox apostolorum ad populum
c. Vox prophetae ad christum de futuro iudicio

ci. Vox ecclesiae cum ascendisset christus ad patrem
cii. Vox ecclesiae ad populum suum
ciii. Vox ecclesiae laudans dominum et opera eius narrans
civ. Vox christi ad apostolos de iudeis
cv. Vox ecclesiae ad apostolos et ad populum
cvi. Vox de iudeis quidam in prosperitate dereliquerunt
cvii. Vox timentis deum seu uox ecclesiae
cviii. Vox christi de iudeis et de iuda traditore
cix. Vox ecclesiae de patri et filio
cx. Vox ecclesiae de christo cum laude
cxi. Vox ecclesiae de christo
cxii. Vox ecclesiae et apostolorum ad nouellum populum
cxiii. Vox apostolica cum iudeorum increpat ydola
cxiv. Vox christi
cxv. Vox Pauli apostoli. Vox martyrum inuictorum qui morte pro christo sustinuerunt
cxvi. Vox apostolorum seu martyrum ad gentes
cxvii. [no *titulus*]
cxviii. Distinctio mistica
cxix. [no *titulus*]
cxx. Vox ecclesiae
cxxi. Vox ecclesiae
cxxii. Vox christi
cxxiii. Vox apostolorum
cxxiv. Vox ecclesiae
cxxv. Vox apostolorum de primis iudeis
cxxvi. Propheta de christo et de ecclesia
cxxvii. Propheta de christo et de ecclesia
cxxviii. Vox ecclesiae et prophetae
cxxix. Vox ecclesiae
cxxx. Vox ecclesiae
cxxxi. Vox christi
cxxxii. Vox apostolorum
cxxxiii. Vox ecclesiae
cxxxiv Vox fidelium domino confitentium
cxxxv. Voc ecclesiae
cxxxvi. Vox christi ad patrem
cxxxvii. Vox ecclesiae, collaudans deum
cxxxviii. [no *titulus*]
cxxxix. Vox ecclesiae

cxl. Intellectus dauid cum esset in spelunca; oratio ad dominum
cxli. Psalmus dauid cum persequeretur eum absalon filius eius
clxii. Psalmus ipsius dauid aduersus goliam
clxiii. Vox ecclesiae ad christum
clxiv. Vox christi ad populum
clxv. Vox ecclesiae et apostolorum
clxvi. Aggei et zachariae
clxvii. Aggei et zachariae
clxviii. Vox christi ad fideles
clxix. Vox christi pro deuicto in regno suo

APPENDIX TWO

Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale, Farfa 4[53]
157 folios including paper quires inserted at the beginning and end.
Modern calf binding. Parchment of high quality.
Collation:

A^8, I^6, II–IV^8, V^4, VI–X^8, XI,$^{4+1}$ XII–XIX^8, XX,$^{2+1}$ B^6

A and B are modern paper gatherings. B is blank. The outer bifolium of I is missing; the first folio probably would have contained a Beatus initial, and the last folio had the missing text between the middle of Psalm 13 and the middle of Psalm 15. V, which contains psalms 76 and 77, is bound out of order; it is the remaining half of the quaternion that belongs at the end of the psalter, between fol. 49 and 50. In VI, between fol. 35 and 37, a leaf has been cut out but its stub remains. The third leaf of XI is an addition. In XVIII, a leaf has been cut out between 130 and 131 but its stub is extant. The last leaf of XX , only partially extant, has been mounted and bound in during restoration.
Dimensions of page: 175 × 106 mm.
Ruling: with a drypoint on the hair side, in one column; double horizontal boundary lines on each side.
Number of lines and dimensions of ruled space for each section:

fols. 1–77v: 23 lines, 118 × 69 mm (drypoint lines added on fol. 77 for the musical notation)
fol. 78: 22 lines, 113 × 69 mm
fols. 79–144: 17 lines, 118 × 71 mm

Script (several different hands of early twelfth century)

1. 1r–65v
2. 66r–74v
3. 75r–v (addition)

76r–v (addition)
77r–v (addition)
78r–v (addition)

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[53] See also the brief descriptions by Giorgio Brugnoli, "Catalogus codicum farfensium," *Benedictina* 6 (1952), 291–97; Paola Supino Martini, *Roma e l'area grafica romanesca* (Alessandria, 1987), p. 263; Marie-Hélène Jullien, "Les sources de la tradition ancienne des quatorze *Hymnes* attribuées à saint Ambroise de Milan," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 19 (1989), 115–16.

79r–88r
89r–144r [some of 89r, faded, was rewritten in the later Middle Ages.]

Musical Notation:

77r–v, a slightly later addition of a responsory and a Benedicamus Domino trope

Hymn melodies notated in Latian neumes with a clef in the margin at a right angle to the text: *Sacratum hoc templum dei* (fol. 133r), *Urbs beata hierusalem* (fol. 133v), *Christe celorum habitator alme* (fol. 134r)

Decoration:

1–78: minor initials in red ink
79–88: red foliate interlace letters executed in reserve, then touched with gold; some with dogs
88v: Major initial for "Primo dierum omnium," mostly cut out (outlined in red on a discontinuous colored ground)
89–144: Minor initials (outlined in red, touched with pale gold wash, some with either a solid background or interstitial infilling)

Contents:

1–49v Psalter (incomplete: Psalms 1–77 only)
50r–88r Prayer collection
88v–132r Hymnary
132r–144r Canticles

Inventory and Transcription of Prayer Collection

50r … uentris tui. Tu sancta et semper uirgo immaculata domina. Tu excelsa et gloriosa super omnia. Tu thalamus inperialis de quo processit unicus dei filius patris. Tu aula summi regis, in qua sunt secreta cælestia. Tu sancta et semper uirgo immaculata puerpera. Ecce o benedicta, orta est ueritas; in te spiritus sanctus descendit. Ex te sol iustitiæ processit. O beata et semper uirgo maria. O stella splendida matutina. Candor paternæ lucis, te totam uirgo perfudit. Splendor paternæ gloriæ quieuit in tuo sancto corpore. Vterus sanctus tuus factus est cælum, in quo quieuit creator omnium rerum. Tua sancta brachia facta sunt cælestia palatia et quem capere non potuit terra et cælum, tuo sancta uirgo residet sinu. Arca sancti pectoris tui facta est dei thronus, de cuius uberibus lac suxit creator omnium et angelorum. Modo quid dicam de tuo sancto et mellifluo ore? quem strictum dulci osculo dedisti saluatoris. Et quem pretiosi oculi uidebant filium suum, et quem osculabaris. Ipse

erat deus et creator tuus. O ineffabile bonum. O ammirabile donum. O inenarrabile gaudium quem tibi nuntiauit Gabrihel archangelus dicens, Aue maria gratia plena dominus tecum. Tecum in utero, tecum in auxilio. Gaude et lætare beata et semper uirgo maria, ecce deus et creator tuus in utero tuo. Modo non restat mihi quid dicam, nisi ut te semper benedicam. Benedicta tu inter mulieres, et benedictus fructus uentris tui. Tu sancta et semper uirgo immaculata, in cælis es exaltata, in terris beatificata. Eleuatus est tuus thronus super choros angelorum. Te laudant angeli, de te exultant archangeli. Omnis chorus sanctorum tuum circumdant thronum. Omnes uirgines sanctæ tibi referunt laudes. Modo gaudent prophetæ qui te desiderabant uidere. Apostoli qui tibi seruierunt modo exultant tecum. O gloriosa et excelsa super omnia quæ sola digna fuisti omni honore et gloria. Heu mihi infelici et misero quas laudes tibi referam nescio. Facilius possum a mea mente excedere quam tuam sanctam claritatem comprehendere. Vt uideo non est lingua tui te possit laudare digne, sed ipsa sola est laus quam tibi angeli canunt. Ego infelix et miser qui te laudare desidero, non te possum plus laudare, quam ut dico dei esse matrem. Non possum dicere tibi plus laudem optimam, quam angelorum et hominum dominam. In cælis sine te nulla laus, in terris sine te nulla salus. Qui te non credit semper esse uirginem et matrem dei non introibit per portas cæli. Ego miser licet indignus te semper confiteor esse uirginem et dei matrem cum omni honore quæ genuisti deum et dominum saluatorem. Per quem sumus saluati et adiuuati, et a morte perpetua liberati. Modo et semper te deprecor domini matrem, ut parcas mihi misero qui te præsumpsi laudare, Et si aliquid dixi indignum, tu mihi parce sancta te semper uirgo, quia ego miser et infelix, quid sum quam terra et cinis, in me nichil uideo bonum, nec rationem nec opus, nisi solam fidem karitatem et spem quam habeo in deo et in te.[54]

51v Te supplico uirgo sancta mater christi immaculata puerpera grata. Maria, stella maris, splendida. Regina cælorum digna. Aula dei munda. Porta christi clausa. Inter mulieres benedicta. Super cælos exaltata.

[54] Edited from Rome, BN Farfa 4 by Henri Barré in *Prières anciennes de l'occident à la Mère du Sauveur* (Paris, 1963), pp. 246–47; Barré thought the text was unique to this manuscript. The prayer was edited and translated by Susan Boynton in *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, pp. 93–95 (with analysis of the text 96–98), with the beginning of the text (which is missing in Rome, BN Farfa 4) taken from Vatican City, BAV Chigi D.VI.79 (from Subiaco), fol. 207v.

Genitrix Christi Maria. Ut apud dominum deum tuum. Ipsum etiam filium tuum. Pro peccatis meis interuenire digneris. Nullus enim in creaturis dignior te, quia ipse qui te creatuit natus est ex te. Proinde nullus libentius audit quam te. Sub tuis uisceribus confugio sancta dei genitrix. Deprecationem meam ne despicias, sed libera me sola casta et benedicta. Admitte preces meas intra sacrarium exauditionis et reporta mihi gratiam reconciliationis. Sit per te excusabile quod per te ingero. Accipe quod offero. Impetra quod rogo. Excusa quod timeo, quia nec potentiorem meritis ad placandam iram iudicis quam te inuenio, quae meruisti mater existere eiusdem redemptoris et iudicis. Sancta maria succure mihi misero, Iuua pisillanimem. Refoue debilem. Ora pro me. Sentiam tuum leuamen quia deuote celebro tuum sanctum nomen. Sit tibi compassio super me. Sit pius affectus tuus super me peregrinum. Et cum te semper laetantem aspicis, fletus meos queso ad deum ipsa admittas eumque ut proprium filium pro me interpelles, ut merear ad gaudia eterna peruenire.[55]

52v Omnipotens sempiterne deus rex regum et dominus dominantium creator omnium. Qui unigenitum filium tuum dominum nostrum ihesum christum, de spiritus sancto conceptum, natum de maria uirgine. De sede maiestatis tue descendere, et carnem humani generis assumere, et crucem passionis pro nobis subire fecisti. Exaudi me miserum et infelicem ad te clamantem, et humiliter deprecantem pro uniuersis malis meis quæ gessi, quia peccaui nimis in uita mea suadente humani generis inimico, consentienti prauae uoluntati meae, delectante foeditate carnis immunditiae. Peccaui nimis in ore meo deus meus, coram te et coram angelis tuis. Heu me quia non sum reueritus faciem tuam. Templum corporis mei, de opere iniquitatis coinquinaui, animam meam in carne positus male pollui. Quid ergo dicturus sum miser cum ante tremendam maiestatis tuae potentiam uenero iudicandus. Si iustus ante te uix saluabitur, ego impius et infelix ubi parebo? Da mihi deus meus lacrimas ut lugere merear. Scelera que gessi succurre mihi deus meus, antequam hinc eam. Succurrite mihi angeli dei, priusquam me absorbeat ignis æternus. Mouete mouete uos lacrimæ mouete, flete oculi mei. Flumina lacrimarum irrigate maxillas meas, irrigate genas meas. Quid ultra faciam domine? Quid respondebo? Nichil inuenio ubi fugiam, nisi

[55] Salmon 63/166/236; ed. Barré, *Prières anciennes*, pp. 98–99, with variants from Farfa 4.

ad te deus meus, qui es benedictus in secula. Tu es deus meus. Tu es redemptor meus. Tu es spes mea. Tu es fortitudo mea. Tu es refugium meum, In te est domine deprecatio mea semper. In te confidit anima mea; precor te domine, antequam discutias me, miserere mei. O sacerdotes dei intercedite pro me, intuemini et uidete si est dolor sicut dolor meus. Orate pro me sancti martyres dei. Orate pro me sanctæ uirgines dei, quae corpora uestra pro christi nomine ad supplicium tradidistis, et certamen forte ad deuincendum inimicum habuistis, et hoc non ex uobis sed dono dei accepistis, pro cuius amore tanta sustinuistis, ut cum ipso in celestibus regnaretis. Ut et uestris intercessionibus fultus, in presenti seculo sine offensione uiuere merear, et aeternæ beatitudinis premia aliquantulum consequi ualeam. Ipso auxiliante qui cum patre et spiritu sancto uiuat et regnat in secula seculorum.[56]

Deus inaestimabilis misericordiae deus immense pietatis, deus conditor et reperator bumani generis, qui confitentium tibi corda purificas et accusantes se ante conspectu diuinae clementiae tuae ab omni uinculo iniquitatis absoluis, uirtutem tuam totis exoro gemitibus, ut secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum de omnibus peccatis meis de quibus me mea conscientia accusat pura mihi coram te concedas agere confessionem. Veramque ex his omnibus et condignam mihi tribuas paenitentiam, quaecumque peccaui, in cogitationibus pessimis, in meditationibus prauis, in consensu malo, in consilio iniquo, in concupiscentia atque delectatione immunda, in uerbis otiosis, in factis malitiosis, in uisu, in auditu, in gustu, in odoratu et tactu. Tu enim misericors deus adoperandum animae meae salutem menbra singula humanis usibus apta dedisti, sed ego miserrime omnium et peccator, te aeternæ salutis auctorem contempsi, et aeterna mihi inimico incendia preparante suadente consensi. Lapsus sum in peccatis, corrui in delictis, in menbris singulis naturae modum excessi, et impiis me laboribus obnoxium fecit. Pedes mei adcurrendum in malum sequendo libidinem, supra modum ueloces fuerunt, et inobedientiam mandatorum tuorum inbeccilles. Crura mea ad me sustinendum in malum fortia. Genua mea ad fornicationem potius quam ad orationem flexi. In femoribus et in genitalibus meis supra modum in omnibus immunditiis contaminari non metui, et reum me omni hora peregi. Venter meus et uiscera mea omnia crapulata sunt iugiter et ebrietate distenta. In

[56] Salmon 158; André Wilmart, "Le Manuel des Prières de Saint Jean Gualbert," *Revue bénédictine* 48 (1936), 259–99, prayer number 23.

renibus et in lumbis illusione diabolica, ac flamma libidinis turpissimo ardeo desiderio. Latera enim mea luxuriam malitiae nunc formidant perpetrare. Dorsum meum ad iniqua roboraui opera, et collum in carnali erexi superbia. Humera mea ad portanda nequitiæ honera subdidi. Et brachia illecebrosis iugiter amplexibus prebui. Manus meae plene sunt sanguine omnibusque sordibus sunt pollutae, promptæ ad omne opus malum, pigrae ad aliquid operandum bonum. Os meum nefando pollutum est osculo, et iniqua est concupiscentia maculatum, uerbaque luxuriosus, ac fabulis otiosis. Superabundanter me et mendacio coinquinaui. Gulae semper et ebrietati deditus, carnalibus numquam desideriis satiatus, sed et lingua mea omni est fallacia profanata. Guttur meum insanabili semper ardet ingluuiae. Aures meae dolosis sunt optusæ loquelis, promptae ad omne malum, surdae ad omne bonum. In naribus namque sepius iniquis delectatus sum odoribus, in quibus etiam putredine uitiorum, atque delictorum minime orrui. Quid dicam de oculis quae omnibus criminibus me fecerunt obnoxium omnemque sensum cordis mei auerterunt, quibus in omni consensi libidine, qui et me quamuis raro in sanctuario tuo domine, te adorantem intuitu peruerterar iniquo omnemque motum corporis mei ad immunda pertraxeret desideria. Caput uero meum omnibus supereminens membris, raro umquam ante deum creatorem meum incuruaui. Sed etiam ceteris menbris in omni malitia consentaneum feci. Cor meum plenum dolo et malitia, numquam pura purgam penitentia, semperque diabolica pollui illusione, et numquam ueram adibui confessionem. Non enim haec narrans tuam domine in me, blasfemo creaturam. Sed in me piissime deus a te exposco medicinam, qui etiam in omnibus menbris meis me reum intellego super mensura, et ut astra caeli atque arena maris
56r mea recognosco innumerabilia esse delicta. Insuper etiam ira, tristitia, accidia, iactantia, uanagloria, atque desidia, omnibusque octo principalibus uitiis, obnoxium me esse profiteor. Sed tibi domine occultorum cognitor qui dixisti, pænitentiam te malle peccatorum quam mortem, omnia cordis mei reuelabo archana. Respice in me et miserere mei, fontemque lacrimarum, et remissionem omnium peccorum meorum intimam mihi confessionem cordis tribue poscenti. Renoua innoua in me piissime pater, quicquid actione, quod uerbo, quod ipsa denique cogitatione diabolica fraude uitiatum est. In unitate corporis æcclesiæ membrum tuæ redemptionis annecte, et non habentem fiduciam nisi in tua misericordia ad sacramentum reconciliationis adruit te. Per ihesum christum unigenitum filium tuum dominum et saluatorem nostrum qui

tecum una cum spiritu sancto unus est dominus per immortalia regnans secula seculorum. Amen.[57]

56v *Oratio ad crucem* Redemptor mundi et illuminator uenientium in hunc mundum. Domine ihesu christe, respice in me prostatrum coram te, et exaudi me inuocantem te. Tu igitur me licet in peccatis conceptum, inuido inspirasti uite spiraculo. Tu me in huius defectibilis presentiam lucis eductum per sacri baptismatis laticem, diabolicis pompis abrenuntiare fecisti et originalia peccata per aquam in me misericorditer deleuisti. Sed fleibilis et miserabilis corporis mei status in omnium peccaminum genera post baptisma temeranter corruit. In gulam scilicet et concupiscentiam, auaritiam atque superbiam, et mandata tua preuaricando, et delectationes meas sequendo, omnigenis uitiorum contagiis pollutus sum et uulneratus. Quapropter a te summo medico remediabilem corporis et animæ deposco medicinam. Tu enim uenisti
57r non iustos sed peccatores reuocare ad pænitentiam dicens: Non sanos indigere medicos, sed male habentes. Sana me, Domine, et sanabor. Asperges me ysopo et mundabor. Laua me et super niuem dealbabor. Reuova me, Domine, per salutiferum crucis tuæ lignum ad percipiendam gratiam tuam, quia criminibus per lignum uetitum Adam præuaricante primum commisis neglegenter prouocaui indignationem tuam. Recrea in me creaturam tuam pro qua pretiosissimum sanguinis tui prætium tradisti, in crucis pendens. Lignum crucis tuæ fiat mihi famulo tuo lorica fortis in corpore, totum medicamen in corde. Sit galea salutis in capite. Sit scutum et arma inuictissima contra omnes uisibilium et inuisibilum inimicorum insidias. Hoc signum insigne sit refugium et auxilium meum in persecutionibus. Sit fortitudo mea temporibus pacis. Sit preuiis per diem. Sit illuminatio mea per noctem. Sit mihi
57v comes in terris. Sit mihi portus salutis in aquis. Fac, Domine, sacratissimam tuæ crucis potentiam mecum esse stando, mecum esse sedendo, mecum esse in itineribus, mecum esse in periculis omnibus, mecum esse in comedendo et bibendo, mecum esse uigilando et dormiendo. Crux sanctificet sensus et cogitationes meas. Crux benedicta benedicat sensus et uerba mea. Crux uenerabilis, uenerabiles faciat sensus et actus meos, nociua omnia repellat a me. Proficua et prospera mihi succedere

[57] Salmon 299; ed. André Wilmart, *Precum Libelli Quattuor Aevi Karolini* (Rome, 1940), pp. 21–24, 73–75.

faciat, omnia uitiorum monstra a me declinare facia, et de uirtutibus in sublimes uirtutum gradus efficaciter conscendere faciat. Antecedat me Domine benedictio sanctae crucis et subsequatur, ut praeclarissimum sanctæ crucis uexillum in presentis uitæ uarietatibus ubique tutus et ab omnibus aduersitatibus merear semper esse securus. Quid tu Domine Ihesu Christe prestare digneris, qui cum patre in unitate spiritus sancti uiuis et regnas deus. Per.[58]

58r *Confessio omnium uitiorum per quam homo deo et confessori suo. Si uult pleniter confiteri potest*. Multitudinem criminum, et enormitatem scelerum meorum domine expauescens. Et de tua pietate, atque ineffabili misericordia confidens. Tibi creatori et redemptori meo, qui ueniam et indulgentiam post reatum per puram et lacrimabilem confessionem assequi promisisti, confiteor quia in peccatis natus, atque in peccatis per omne tempus uitæ meæ cogitando, loquendo, et operando, hactenus sum conuersatus, operibus enim ac pompis diaboli quibus in baptismo abrenuntiaueram, iterum suadente me subdidi, et inde post modum turpiter semper et desidiose uixi.

Ac primo omnium de superbia, quæ radix est omnium malorum mores et uitam atque actus meos pessime inquinaui, et per superbiam
58v contra deum et contra religionem ac positum meum, in uerbis, in cogitationibus, in desideriis, in operibus, in incessum, in uictu et uestitu, et caeteris omnibus modis quos annumerare non ualeo, grauiter me in conspectu dei deliquisse confiteor.

De inani etiam gloria. Similiter multis modis me deliquisse, et cotidie delinquere confiteor, pro qua assidue in peccatis meis mundi gloriam et sæculares dignitates ac delectationes ultra modum amplector et concupisco. Et per eam in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa nascuntur. In obedientia preceptis dei et seniorum et magistrorum iussionibus non obediendo, et in iactantia animum in multis uanitatibus extollendo, et in ypocrisi, aliut corde retinendo, et aliud ore manifestando. Et in contentione inutiliter contra rationem intendendo, et in pertinacia in his quæ non oportet, procaciter persistendo. Et in discordiis inter concordes iurgia
59r et dissensiones seminando, et in nouitatum presumptionibus, nouas et non ante consuetas res præsumendo grauiter me peccasse scio et confiteor.

[58] Edited by André Wilmart in "Prières médiévales pour l'adoration de la Croix," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 46 (1932), pp. 31–33.

De inuidia uero, per quam diabolus primum hominem decepitur, et per quam mors in orbem terrarum introiuit per omnes homines, reum me et sceleratum esse confiteor, quia aliorum bonus inuidendo, et de eorum utilitatubus dolendo animum sepe contristatus sum, et in quibuscumque potium illorum prosperitatibus nocui, et si nocere non potui, inuidiose tam tuli, et per eam in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa oriuntur, id est in odio contra multos inimicitias et odia in corde retinendo, et in susurratione contra deum et seniores ac magistros murmurando, et in detractione multis presentibus atque absentibus detrahendo, et in exultatione in aduersis proximi, et contrarietatibus, et impedimentis
59v eorum exultando, et de prosperitatibus illorum contristando multipliciter me peccasse recognosco et confiteor.

De ira quoque multotities me peccasse et reum esse scio et confiteor quia illatas ab aliis iniurias leuiter et equo animo ut debueram non sustinui, sed ad iracundiam et uindictam in quantum potui, et meam et aliorum animas prouocaui. Et per hanc in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa oriuntur, id est rixis, adiurgia et contentiones, non solum me, sed et alios excitando, et in tumore mentis contra aliorum leuissimas et humiles querelas, animum superbe inflando et in contumeliis calumpnis aliis inferendo, et in indignationibus de his quibus non oportebat indignando, et in blasphemiis multos sine causa iracundæ blasphemando satis grauiter in conspectu dei me deliquisse recognosco et confiteor.
60r De tristitia etiam non mediocriter me peccasse scio et confiteo, quia inutiliter et sine causa plerumque me contristaui de uanis et nichil utilitatis habentibus rebus tristitiam habui. Et per hanc in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa nascuntur, id est in malitia malam uoluntatem contra multos habendo, et in insano ore contra plerosque scandalizatum animum portando, et pusillanimitate uigorem et fortitudinem animi prae tristitia amittendo. Et in desperatione de pietate et misericordia dei desperando, et in torpore circa praecepta dei, intentionem ac studium in mandatis dei non habendo, et in uagatione mentis erga illicita, otiositatem sectando et rebus illicitis mentem occupando, multoties me peccasse confiteor.

De auaritia etiam grauissime reum me esse confiteor quia contra præceptum domini et habenda nimis concupiui et concupisco, et habita nimis auare retinui et retineo. Et proximorum necessitatibus et indigentiis non ita subueni et ministraui sicut debui et potui. Et per hanc in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa oriuntur, id est in proditione aliorum et maxime seniorum secreta et occulta prodendo ac manifestando, et in fraude aliorum res furtim auferendo et concupiscendo, et in fallaciis mendacia inueniendo et proferendo, et in periuriis nomen sanctum dei

ac sanctorum illius inuocando et periurando, et in obduratione cordis contra misericordiam, elemosinarum scilicet largitionem in pauperibus ut potueram et debueram non erogando, satis grauiter me peccasse et cotidie peccare et confiteor.

De uentris uero ingluuiæ satis periculose et dampnabiliter me peccasse et cotidie peccare confiteor, quia ultra modum et supra quam necessitas
61r et indigentia corporalis exposcebat in sumendo cibum et potum uentrem actenus ingurgitaui et cotidie ingurgitare non omitto. Et unde mihi et aliis multis indigentibus satisfacere potui, solus prae nimia edacitate et ingluuie consumpsi, et ideo per hanc in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa orientur, id est inepta lætitia, de uanitatibus lætando et gaudendo, et in scurrilitate locis et risibus ostendando et delectando, et in multiloquio ea quæ ad utilitatem non pertinent, multipliciter loquendo et in hebitudine sensus acumen mentis et intellegentiam prae nimia cibi et potus uoracitate amittendo, multum me grauiter peccasse confiteor.

De luxuria quoque ultra omnes homines et ultra quam mens humana comprehendere possit me reum et sceleratissimum esse confiteor, quia postquam ad illam perueni qua hoc malum perpetrare uolentibus consensi nimis suadente diabolo turpiter semper et luxuriose ac sodomitice
61v uixi et templum corporis mei de opere iniquitatis et scelere sodomitico, alios ipse commaculando et me commaculare uolentibus consentiendo turpissime et dicto ipso nefandissime ut miser et flagitiossimus inquinaui, et per hanc in cæteris uitiis quæ ex illa nascuntur, id est in cecitate mentis ea scilicet quæ utilia et necessaria erant non intellegendo, et in consideratione leuiter et lasciuiose atque inconsiderate multa faciendo. Et inconstantia stabilitatem et constantiam in operibus bonis non habendo, et in precipitatione precipitato animo in consultæ multa operando, et in amore mei ultra quam debui delectatione et desideria carnis mee, et uoluntates proprias querendo et adimplendo, et in odo dei præceptis scilicet illius resistendo et eum ut deus diligendus est non diligendo. Et in affectu presentis seculi, amore uidelicet et desiderium in carnalibus
62r et secularibus studiis ultra quam oportuerat infigendo, in honore ac desperatione futuri seculi de futura scilicet uita non cogitando, et non solum in his, sed etiam in omnibus quæ supra me morata sunt grauiter in infelicissime in conspectu dei me peccasse et deliquisse confiteor, ac nisi diuinam misero subueniat misericordia, omni modis me cogitatione, locutione, opere, ac uoluntate perditum scio. Et ideo antequam terra cum dathan et abiron me absorbeat, et antequam ignis cælestis cum sodomitis me exurat, ad te deum et dominum creatorem meum qui non uis mortem peccatoris, sed ut conuertatur et uiuat,

confugio. Et ait qui latroni in cruce credenti, et puplicano ac meretrici confitentibus pepercisti ueniam et indulgentiam humiliter exposco, ne confundas piissime faciem meam. Ne derelinquas me in manibus querentium animam meam, sed suscipe propitius et exaudi me miserum et peccatorem clamantem et confugientem ad te. Aperi sinum pietatis
62v ac ianuam misericordiæ tuæ. Et resuscita mortuum in peccatis, uiuifica sepultum in delictis, et ne abicias quem ad ymaginem tuam redimere dignatus es. Tu penitentibus ueniam promisisti. Tu mauis gaudium esse in cælis super uno peccatore pænitentiam agentem quam supra nonaginta nouem iustis asseruisti, Tu per sanctum prophetam tuum nobis promisisti, in quacumque die peccator conuersus fuisset, dimittenda ei peccata sua. Quapropter sponsiones tuas teneo, de promissionibus tuis gaudeo, cum tota spe ac securitate ad immensam clementiam tuam confugio. Parce malis meis, parce peccatis et sceleribus meis. Maior est misericordia tua quam miseria mea. Maior est clementia tua quam iniquitas mea. Exaudi domine, placare domine, attende et fac. Inclina deus meus aurem tuam et exaudi orationem meam, aperi oculos tuos et uide contristationem meam. Quamuis peccator sum, tamen creatura tua sum, unigeniti filii tui sanguine redemptus. Non sim tibi uilis ad
63r saluandum qui non fui uilis ad redimendum, sed miserere propitius et indulge qui uiuis et regnas in secula seculorum. Amen.[59]

Oratio Deus iustorum gloria et misericordia peccatorum, que dixisti nolo mortem peccatoris sed ut conueratur et uiuat. Suscipe me piissime pater penitentem famulum tuum quia tibi confiteor omnia delicta mea, quæcumque peccaui coram te et coram sanctis angelis tuis, in cogitatione, in uerbo in opere, in omnibus simul uitiis et peccatis.

Siue in superbia et elatione, unde me grauissime reor esse pollutum. Et in omnibus peccatis quæ nascuntur ex ea, in inobedientia, in presumptione iniqua, atque in pertinacia et contentione, uel etiam in arrogantia et obstinatione.

Siue in gula, in qua me super mensuram occupatum estime, et in uniuersis uitiis quæ generantur ex ea, in inonesta lætitia, in scurrilitate et risu, in uaniloquio, in immunditia cordis simul et corporis, in instabilitate
63v mentis, in libidine et ebrietate, in comesatione non modica.

In fornicatione quoque multis modis me pollutum esse sentio et in cunctis sceleribus quæ pululantur ex ea. In cecitate mentis, in uisu malo

[59] Salmon 562; linked there to immediately following confession text.

et noxio, in auditu malo ac turpiloquio, in gustu immoderato, in odoratu scelesto, in tactus nequissimo, in consensu delectationis malignæ, in immenso amore propriæ uoluntatis, in periculo uitæ, in lasciuia et petulantia, in continentia mali desiderii, in odio mandatorum tuorum, in consilio iniquitatis, in neglegentia atque in inconsideratione uitæ futuræ.

In auaritia quoque superabundatur me spero esse demersum, et in tota serie criminum quæ procedent ex ea. In inuidia et dolo, in furta et rapina, in periurio atque mendacio, in iniquitudine mentis, in iniusto
64r iudice uel fraude, in ueritatis contemptu, in obliuione beatitudinis sempiternæ, in obduratione mentis.

Deinde in ira et iracundia nimium me esse arbitror deprauatum et in omnibus delictis ex eis radice surgentibus, in tumore mentis, in rix et dissensione, in contumelia, in iniurgandi et ulciscendi amore, in odio, in impatientia, in maledictionibus et blasphemiis, in indignatione iniqua, in recordatione iniuriæ meæ.

In accidia etiam spero me nimium obnoxium esse et in omnibus labefacinorum ex eius fomite prorumpentium, in sompnolentia et boni operis pigritia, in inconstantia, in deprauatione mentis, in trepidatione laborandi, in tedio cordis, in murmuratione atque detractione.

In tristia iniusta ab antiquo in me hoste inmissa et in eis semine ualde sum obuolutus, in malignitate animi, in asperitate linguæ, in amaritudine
64v uerborum, in rancore animi, in pusillanimitate.

In cenodoxie namque uitio et omnibus malis quæ prodeunt ex ea ualde me deprauatum esse arbitror, in iactantia, in arrogantia, in indignatione proximorum, in discordia et ypocrisin, et in innumeris peccatis.

Insuper etiam multis in afflictione et angustia constitutis per gratiam tuam subuenire potui, multosque de tribulatione et angustia liberare, sed meis peccatis tardantibus minus hoc egi quam debui, et sepe sciens malum persilui, et bonum loqui neglexi, unde me nunc reum esse grauissime sentio, meque reum esse confiteor.

Sed tu domine qui omnia nosti etiam antequam fiant, tibi patefacio omnia facinora cordis mei, tuam misericordiam humiliter inuoco, et omnia quæcumque peccaui coram te, et de quibuscumque me mea accusat conscientia, seu quæ confessum atque per neglegentiam uel
65r obliuionem detegi in cogitatu, in uerbo, et opere, uel neglegentia mea, haec omnia obliuioni imperpetuum tradas.

Tu deus infinitæ misericordiæ qui omnibus inuocantibus te in ueritate subueniri soles, te supplici mente deposco ut ex his omnis mihi

in huius uitae spatio locum pænitentiæ compunctionemque per omnia dignam, uberem etiam lacrimarum fontem quo defleam peccata multa quæ commiseram largire digneris.

Nam si quae sunt de supra nominatis quibus non sum pollutus, tua est domine defensio, malum uero semper a me factum scio, siue ab incautione mea uel etiam ignorantia. Tuum tamen domine plasma sum, tuoque sacratissimo sanguine redemisti me, miserere mei et gemitum fructiferum tribue ne iterum lugenda committam.

Tu domine piissime omnium bonorum largitor. tribue mihi contra spiritum superbie humilitatem ueram, per quam uniuersa mala superbiæ ualeam euincere.

65v Contra gulam et concupiscentiam malam continentiam dignam.

Contra immunditiam fornicationis cordis et corporis castitatem et totius prauæ delectationis mortificationem ieiunium uel orationis instantiam atque uigiliarum consuetudinem sanctam, ita ut omnia ualeam temptamenta diaboli per misericordiam gratiæ tuæ superare.

Contra auaritiam tibi placitam largitatem uires et scientia superandi omnia que nascuntur.

Contra ire impetum patientiam ac temperantiam animi, ita ut omnia que procedunt ex ea extinguuntur in me.

Contra accidiam boni operis perseuerantiam et studium sancti certaminis ad adimplendam in omnibus uoluntatem tuam, quantum tuæ sit donum pietatis in me.

Contra tristitiam gaudium mihi domine tribue spiritualem per quod omnia uitiorum mala penitus euellantur.

Contra uanam gloriam plenissimam fidem. Spem firmam et karitatem perfectam, ut te toto corde, tota mente, tota etiam merear uirtute diligere.

Hic quoque omnium peccatorum remissionem pleniter percipere et in futuro uitam aeternam atque lætitiam possidere, quod ipse prestare dignetur qui cum patre et spiritu sancto uiuit et regnat in secula seculorum. Amen.[60]

66r *Ad personam patris* Domine deus pater omnipotens, qui consubstantialem et coæternum tibi ante omnia ineffabiliter filium genuisti, cum quo atque cum sancto spiritu ex te eodemque filio procedente, omnia quæcumque

[60] Salmon 563.

existunt uisibilia atque inuisibilia creasti, te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico. Esto quæso propitius mihi peccatori, et ne despicias me opus manuum tuarum, sed salua et adiuua propter nomen sanctum tuum. Amen.[61]

Ad personam filii. Domine ihesu christe filius dei uiui, filii qui es uerus et omnipotens deus, splendor et ymago patris et uita æterna, cui una est cum patre sanctoque spiritu substantia, æquus honor, eadem gloria, coæterna maiestas, te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico, ne me obsecro perire patiaris, sed salua et adiuua gratuitu munere tuo quæ dignatus es redimere pretioso sanguine tuo. Amen.[62]

66v *Ad personam spiritus sancti* Domine sancte spiritus, qui coaequalis et consubstantialis et coaeternus patri filioque existens, ab eis inennarabiliter procedis. Qui super eundem dominum nostrum ihesum christum in columbe speciæ, super apostolos in linguis igneis descendisti. Te adoro, te laudo, te benedico, teque glorifico. Depelle a me quæso tenebras totius iniquitatis et perfidiæ. Accende in me lumen tue misericordiæ, et ignem sanctissimi ac desiderabilis amoris tui. Amen.[63]

De trinitate. Domine deus omnipotens æterne ineffabilis, sine fine atque initio, quem unum in trinitate, et trinum in unitate confitemur. Te solum adoro, laudo et glorifico, tibi quod misericors et clemens gratias refero, qui me exutum nocte perfidie et erroris participem fieri tribuisti gratiæ tuæ. Perfice quæso domine ceptum in me opus misericordiæ tuæ. Dona mihi semper cogitare, loqui, et agere quæ placita sit tibi, et gratuita me ubique pietate custodi. Fac me ad tuam peruenire uisionem.[64]

67r *Ad sanctum michahelem*. Sancte michahel archangele domini mei ihesu christi, qui uenisti in adiutorium populo dei, subueni mihi apud altissimum iudicem. Ut mihi donet remissionem, omnium peccatorum propter magnam miserationum suarum clementiam. Exaudi me sancte michahel

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[61] Salmon 136/419; ed. PL 101.1399; Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 14–15, 139; Wilmart, "Le manuel," number II 1.

[62] Salmon 137; ed. PL 101.1399; Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 15, 139; Wilmart, "Le manuel," number II 2, p. 276.

[63] Salmon 138; ed. PL 101.1339; Wilmart, *Precum Libelli*, p. 15, 139; Wilmart, "Le manuel," number II 3.

[64] Salmon 395/139; ed. PL 101.1399; Wilmart, *Precum Libelli*, pp. 15–16, 139; Wilmart, "Le manuel," number II, 4.

inuocantem te, et adiuua me maiestatem dei adorantem. Interpella pro me peccata mea ingemescentem, te fac me castum esse ab omnibus peccatis. Insuper obsecro te per clarum atque decorem summe diuinitatis ministrum, ut in nouissimo die, benigne suscipias animam meam in sinu tuo sanctissimo, et perducas eam in locum refrigerii pacis, et quietis, ubi sanctorum anime cum lætitia et gaudium futurum iudicium et gloriam beatae resurrectionis expectant. Amen.[65]

67r *Ad Sanctum Gabrihel.* Precor te princeps egregie Gabrihel fortissime ago-
67v nitheta certantium. Exurge mihi in adiutorium aduersus malignantes, et sta mecum contra aduersarios meos, te contra omnes operantes iniquitatem. Detege uersutos hostes et contere uiolentos, ut omnes aduersantes mihi, tuo opitulatu fugentur, fauente christo ihesu domino nostro. Amen.[66]

Ad sanctum Raphahel. Auxiliare michi obsecro et tu princeps raphahel. Animarum et corporum optime medicator, et qui corporeos tobiae oculos presentialiter medicando illuminasti, meos quoque spiritales ac carnales oculos illustrare et cunctas mei cordis et corporis tenebras amputare celitus orando ne differas. Amen.[67]

67v *Ad proprium angelum.* Queso te et obsequenter rogo sancte angele dei, cui deus omnipotens dignatus est committere curam anime meae. Contra malignos angelos et iniquos uiros, fer mihi potenter auxilium, ne uel
68r astutia frangant quaeso et uiribus mihi foue et precibus auxiliante domino nostro ihesu christo.[68]

68r *Oratio* Benedictum dictum est nomen tuum domine deus patrum nostrorum, qui cum iratus fueris misericordiam facis et in tempore tribulationis peccata dimittis his qui inuocant nomen tuum. Ad te domine faciem meam conuerto; tibi omnia peccata mea confiteor tu nosti omnia antequam fiant; tu scis quia post baptismum percepta tua contempsi, et mandata tua non custodiui et bona quod debui facere per neglegentiam

[65] Salmon 512; ed. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels*, pp. 212–213.
[66] Ed. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels*, p. 580, with variants from Farfa 4.
[67] Ed. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels*, pp. 580–81, with variants from Farfa 4.
[68] Salmon 513; ed. Wilmart, *Auteurs spirituels*, p. 581, with comment on Farfa ms.

non feci, et mala quod non debui facere per audaciam perpetraui, et per concupiscentia multa mala feci. In uisu, in auditu, in gustu, in odoratu et tactu, in cogitatione, in locutione, in pollutione, in fornicatione, et in omnibus ex quibus cogitare potui, et quod ante sanctum altare tuum coram te et coram angelis tuis, et coram sanctis tuis promisi non
68v custodiui sicut debui, et precepta prioris non obediui sicut debui. Sed superbiendo, contempnendo, neglegendo, propriam uoluntatem faciendo, murmurando, detrahendo, poenam incurri. Deus tu scis insipientiam meam, et delicta mea, a te non sunt abscondita. Aspice in me confitentem peccata mea et misera mihi, quia tu dignatus es dicere nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut conuertatur et uiuat. Effunde super me misericordiam tuam et dimitte mihi omnia peccata mea. Salus et uita omnium et da mihi perseuerantiam in bonis operibus ut te miserante peruenire merear in gloria regni tui. Saluator mundi.[69]

Oratio sancti gregorii. Dominator domine deus omnipotens, qui es trinus in personis et unus in deitate. Pater in filio, et filius in patre, cum spiritu sancto, qui es semper in omnibus et eras ante omnia, et eris per omnia deus benedictus in secula, Amen. Commendo animam meam in manus potentiæ tuæ, ut custodias eam diebus ac noctibus horis atque momentis. Miserere mei deus angelorum, dirige me, rex archangelorum. Custodi me per orationes patriarcharum, per merita prophetarum, per suffragia apostolorum, per uictorias martyrum, per fides confessorum, qui tibi placuerunt ab initio mundi. Oret pro me sanctus abel qui primus coronatus est martyrio. Oret pro me sanctus enoch qui ambulauit cum domino, et translatus est de mundo. Oret pro me sanctus noe quem dominus seruauit in diluuio propter iustitiam. Roget pro me fidelis abraam qui primus credidit deo, cui reputata est fides ad iustitiam. Intercedat pro me sanctus ysaac qui fuit obediens patri usque ad mortem in exemplum domini nostri ihesu christi qui oblatus est patri pro salute mundi. Postulet pro me fidelis iacob qui uidit angelos dei uenientes in auxilium sui. Oret pro me sanctus moyses cum quo locutus est dominus facie ad faciem. Subueniat mihi sanctus dauid quem elegisti regem secundum cor tuum domine. Deprecetur pro me sanctus helias propheta, quem eleuasti in curru igneo usque ad cælum. Oret pro me sanctus heliseus, qui suscitauit mortuum post mortem. Oret pro me sanctus esayas, cui mundata sunt labia ignis celestis. Intercedat pro me hieremias, quem

[69] Salmon 119.

sanctificasti in utero matris. Oret pro me ezechihel sanctus propheta, qui uidit uisiones mirabiles dei. Deprecetur pro me electus danihel desiderabilis deo, qui soluit somnia regis et interpretatus est et bis liberatus est de lacu leonum. Et tres pueros qui liberati sunt de igne: ananias, azarias, misahel, omnes[70] sancti prophete, osee, amos, micheas, iohel, abdias, abbacuc, ionas, naum, sophonias, aggeus, zacharias, malachias, esdras, hos omnes inuoco in adiutorium meum. Intercedat pro me sanctus iohannes precursor domini. Assistant mihi omnes apostoli domini mei ihesu christi. Petrus, Paulus, Andreas, Iacobus, Philippus, Bartholomeus, et omnis chorus sanctorum intercedant pro me. Depelle a me domine concupiscentiam gule et da mihi uirtutem abstinentiæ, fuga a me spiritum fornicationis, et da michi ardorem castitatis. Da mihi uoluntariam paupertatem. Coibe iracundiam meam, et da mihi caritatem dei et proximi. Abscide a me tristitias sæculi, et auge mihi gaudium spiritualem. Expelle a me iactantiam mentis, et tribue mihi compunctionem cordis. Minue superbiam, et perfice in me humilitatem ueram. Indignus ego sum et infelix homo quis me liberauit de corpore mortis huius peccati nisi gratia domini nostri ihesu christi quia peccator sum et innumerabilia sunt peccata mea et non sum dignus uocari seruus tuus. Suscita in me fletu mollifica cor meum durum et lapideum, et accende in me ignem amoris et timoris tui, quia sum puluis et cinis.
70v Libera anima mea ab omnibus insidiis inimici, et conserua me in tua uoluntate. Doce me facere uoluntatem tuam quia tu es dominus deus meus. Qui es benedictus in sæcula sæculorum.[71]

Oratio sancti effrem. Sana me domine et sanabor, qui solus sapiens et misericors medicus es. Supplico benignitate tuæ sana uulnera anime meæ et illumina oculos mentis meæ et considerere dispensationem tuam quæ in me semper efficitur, et quia infatuata est mens mea, gratia tua que est sal ueritatis condiat eam, et quid ad te hæ loquor? Tu domine cunctorum es prescius, quique scrutator et renum et cordis. Solus enim nosti quoniam sicut terra sine aqua fuit ita animam meam ad te et cor meum desiderat. Quisquis autem diligit te in desinenter tua gratia satiatur. Sicut enim audisti me semper etiam nunc ne despicias depre-
71r cationem meam. Ecce enim quasi captiuitata est mens mea, te solum

[70] *Ms*: omnis
[71] Related to Salmon 108/155/219/261; ed. PL 101.589–591; Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 11–13.

saluatorem ueritatis exquirens. Mitte itaque gratiam tuam uelocius et ueniat in auxilium cuius et satiet esuriem meam et siti meæ potum tribuat. Te enim desidero insanabilem dominum quis enim poterit ex tuis fontibus satiari nisi qui te ex ueritate dilexerit. Te ergo sitio lumen ueritatis et luminis lumen tributorem. Da mihi petitionem meam et dona mihi deprecationem meam et distilla in cor meum stillam dilectionis tuae. Accendat in cor meum quasi silua comburens flammas caritatis tue dulcedines et deuoret spinas et tribulos scilicet cogitationes pessimas, et tribue mihi copiose et sine mensura quasi deus homini gratiam bonitatis tuæ, et dona mihi domine piissime qui es rex regum et multiplica quasi pater bonus filio in omnibus dona. Si autem priuatus sum in quibusdam
71v aut pretior quasi terreni. Sed tu qui replesti hydrias benedictionibus tuis imple sitim meam dono gratiæ tuæ. Qui sanasti quinque milia uirorum de quinque panibus sagina quoque et imple esuriem meam et immensa copia uoluntatis tuæ. Amator hominum benignissime, si super fenum et super flores et super omnem herbam uirentem terræ sine inuidia hoc tempore gratia tua effusa est, quanto magis seruorum tuorum qui te deprecantur misericordiam largire conuenit. Ecce enim et aera fulgore coruscant uoluens quoque uocem suauem omittunt ad gloriam multitudinis sapientiæ tuæ. Ecce enim et terra uarietate florum quasi diploide induitur quæ sine manibus texitur exultans festiuitatem duplicitur celebrat. Unam quidem pro adam filio suo primogenito quia uiuifica-
72r tus est a christo alteram pro domino suo qua descendens super eam ambulare dignatus est. Ecce enim etiam mare multiplicabitur a gratia tua et eos qui in ea nauigant facit esse locupletes eadem gratia etiam mihi loquendi ad te fiduciam tribuat. Qui suscepisti duo minuta illius uiduæ et laudibus extulisti, suscripe deprecationem serui tui, et auge in orationem meam, et da mihi petitionem cordis mei, ut templum sanctum efficiar gratiæ tuæ ut habitet in me, et ipsa me doceat quomodo ei te placere debeam, ut posset in membris meis atque in uisceribus ueluti cinera quæ sunt plena compunctionis atque lætitiæ infundi. Mentem quoque meam quasi quodam freno constrigat ne oberrans in peccato corruam et a claritate luminis illius expellar. Exaudi me domine, exaudi me et presta michi ut uocari merear in regno tuo, quia quondam uagus
72v et errabundus fueram, nunc autem sum congregatus, quicum essem immundus a te mundatus sum. Et qui insipiens fui nunc uero sum sapiens in te. Et quia linquando inutilis nunc utilis effectus sum. Gres tuus electus monachorumque conuentus et omnium sanctorum qui placuerunt te qui nunc in paradyso exultant, ipsi deprecantur pro me et obsecrant te solum amatorem hominum. Exaudi es quoque eos et

saluabo me per obsecrationem eorum. Ego quoque tibi per eos gloriam et laudem offero, qui exaudisti orationem eorum et misertus es michi, et non despexisti deprecationes eorum quæ pro salute animæ meæ profusi sunt. Tu autem domine per prophetam dixisti, aperi os tuum et ego adimplebo illud. Ecce itaque os serui tui cum cor deapertum est, imple illud gratia tua ut te semper benedicat. Christe saluator meus irriga cor meum rore gratiæ tuæ, amator hominum benignis-
73r sime. Quem ammodum enim terra eum feritur generationes suas non ualet enutrire nisi a bonitate tua fuerit uisitata, sic neque cor meum proloqui ualet quæ tibi sunt placita absque gratia tua, uel fructificare fructum iustitiæ tuæ. Ecce enim nascentia terre enutrit pluuia desuper ueniens, nec non etiam arborum flores uarietate depingit sic etiam ros gratiæ tuæ mentem meam illuminet, ut floribus compunctionis per ueram humilitatem et obedientiam seniorum ac patientiam adornetur. Et quid dicam? Ecce oratio mea infirma existit, et iniquitates meæ magne ac ualide sunt, et delicta mea affligunt me, et infirmitates meæ gemere me faciunt et compellunt uincat ergo gratia tua quia peruisti oculos mentis meæ ut pulchritudinem tuam semper considerem,
73v et qui aperuisti os subiugalis aperi os meum in laudem et gloriam gratiæ tuæ. Qui posuisti terminum mari uerbo precepit tui, pone etiam terminum cordi meo per gratiam tuam, ut non declinet ad dexteram neque ad sinistram a maiestate tua. Qui aquam in deserto tribuisti populo non credenti et contradicenti, da mihi compunctionem et oculis meis lacrimas ut defleam diebus ac noctibus omnes dies, neglegentiæ meæ cum humilitate et caritate et puritatem cordis. Appropriet orationem meam in conspectu tuo domine, et dona mihi semper templum tuum ut ibi offeram manipulos compunctionis et confessionis rectæ, et dicam: Gloriam qui mihi hæc tribuit, ut ego offeram ei etiam quod ab eo accepi, et ad orationem ei procidam qui mihi tanta largitus est. Exaudi domine orationem serui tui precibus sanctorum tuorum, qui es super omnia benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.

Oratio Benedictus es domine deus patrum nostrorum, et laudabile et
74r gloriosum nomen tuum in æternum et in secula seculorum amen. Benedictus es in omnibus operibus tuis. Te benedico, te adoro, te glorifico, tua omnipotens clementiam et misericordiam super eximploro. Tu es deus meus uiuus et uerus, et non habeo alium deum praeter te trinum et unum. Parce peccatis meis, parce iniquitatibus meis. Sub ueni mihi per misericordiam tuam. Illam quam pro redemptione nostra seruili forma suscipere dignatus es, tu fecisti me piissime domine

et non redemisti me auro neque argento neque pecunia, sed proprio ac pretiosissimo sanguine tuo. Per ipsam misericordiam tuam te rogo custodi me et defende me et doce me facere uoluntate tua propter merita genitricis tuæ et sanctorum angelorum, patriarcharum, prophetarum, apostolorum, et martyrum tuorum. Libera me de manibus inimicorum meorum et ambulem in mandatis tuis. Qui misertus es meretrici et publicano miserere mihi. Qui multis peccatoribus subuenisti et omnes suscipis currentes ad te, subueni mihi pie pater, et ne me despicias, ne me confundas, sed respice in me et miserere mihi domine deus. Ego super latrones, super meretrices, et super publicanos peccaui. Non est peccatum quod me pretereat. Scio quia multa est iniquitas mea, sed misericordia tua peccata totius mundi exuperat. Et ideo confisus de tua pietate desperare non presumo. Non habeo ubi confugium faciam, nisi ad te deum uiuum et uerum, in cuius manus multe sunt miserationes. Quamuis uulneratus seu grauatus omnibus malis, ad te clamo, et ad te expecto ueniam. Conuerte me deus ad te, clarifica nomen tuum in me, miserum peccatorem et premiam tuam aspice in me et miserere mihi qui es benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.[72]

Confessio. Confiteor tibi ihesu christe quia peccaui nimius coram te. Nimis erraui. Nimis a te longe discessi, sed precor ut miserearis mei, et… [text incomplete]

75r O beata dei genitrix uirgo semper piissima domina mea, post dominum meum qui me plasmauit, ad te confugio, et pro omnibus peccatis meis me ipsum trado seruum ut ut sim tibi post filium tuum seruus perpetuus. Licet enim sum seruus eiusdem filii tui ab eo creatus et eius pretioso sanguine redemptus tamen prae cunctis mortalibus quos redemit peccatorem et miserabiliorem me recognosco. Unde ad tuam confugio immensam misericordiam ut per te purificatus, ad tuum ualeam peruenire filium qui me creauit ne ne miserrimum queso mi domina despicias, sed in sanctissima fide tua me suscipe, qui es spes omnium miserorum, et neminem ad te confugiente despicis. Sed cunctis amplissima benignitate suscipis, unde humiliter tuam rogo pietatem ut me miserum suscipere digneris misericordissima domina. et nunquam me patiaris predam fieri hostibus meis nec captiuari animam meam. Sed

[72] Salmon 151.

tua semper defensione protectus atque ab angustiis omnibus liberatus ueniam et remissionem omnium peccatorum meorum merear inuenire. Amen.[73]

Benedictum est nomen tuum domine deus patrum nostrorum, quicum iratus fueris misericordiam facis, et in tempore tribulationis peccata
75v dimittis his qui inuocant nomen tuum ad te domine faciem meam conuerto tibi omnia peccata mea confiteor tu nosti omnia antequam fiant tu scis quia post baptismum precepta tua contempsi, et mandata tua non custodiui, et bona quod debui facere per neglegentiam non feci, et mala quod non debui facere per audaciam perpetraui, et per concupiscentia multa mala feci in uisi, in auditu, in gustu, in odoratu et tactu, in cogitatione, in locutione, in pollutione, in fornicatione, et in omnibus uitiis ex quibus cogitare potui, et quod ante altare sanctum tuum coram te et coram angelis tuis et coram sanctis tuis promisi non custodiui sicut debui, sed superbiendo, contempnendo, neglegendo, propria uoluntatem faciendo, murmurando, detrahendo, penam incurrit. Deus tu scis insipientia mea, et delicta mea a te non sunt abscondita. Aspice in me confitentem peccata mea et miserere mei, quia tu dignatus es dicere Nolo mortem peccatoris sed ut conuertatur et uiuat, effunde super me misericordiam tuam, et dimitte michi omnia peccata mea, salus et uita omnium, et da michi perseuerandam in bonis operibus ut te miserante peruenire mereare in gloria regni tui. Saluator mundi.[74]

76r Beatissime bariona primari dei confessor, pastor quoque noster, gregius dei minister aecclesie defensor, cui specialius dictum christi, singulariter concessum est ut quecumque ligares super terram ligata essent in celis, et quaecumque solueris soluta essent et in celis. Solue quesumus nexus peccatorum, et criminum nostrorum. Dissolue compedes concupiscentiarum. Peccauimus, inique egimus, infeliciter deliquimus. Ab ipsa natiuitate usque in hanc horam, toto uitae nostrae tempore. Cogitando turpia, loquando turpiora, agendo turpissima, et quoddam infelicius enormitate scelerum consumpsimus uitam nostram. Ipsa preuia consuetudine in baratrum dampnationis dimersi sumus, o qui infinita misera, o qui inestabimilis angustia, o qui intolerabilis peccatorum recordatio. Quo ibimus, quo declinabimus a facie furoris, a facie exactoris, nisi ad

[73] Ed. Barré, *Prières anciennes*, p. 148.
[74] The same text appears on fol. 68v.

te petre, forma penitentie. Spes reconciliationis, largitor lacrimarum, doctor amari fletus? Tu sancte petre, peccata tua confitendo, deum saluatorem humiliter a te reppulisti dicens, Exi a me quia homo peccator sum deus, et te dominum negasti, ut ex tua infirmitate disceres, qualiter nostra infirma tolerares. Surge ergo pro nobis petre surge, qui dominum non solum tu set milies pro dolor negauimus. In tua karitate et aduocatione nos suscipe. Esto pro nobis intercessor in celis, qui noster es aduocatus in terris. Offer pro nobis precum legationes. Offer misericordiae orationes pio magistro, pio domine. Ut qui te reuocauit errantem, et respexit lacrimantem audiat et te pro nobis intercedentem. Aufer a nobis duritiam cordis, confer ubertatem lacrimarum, et compunctionis affectum. Da nobis per dei gratiam fideri tue constantiae, ut tue uirtutis exemplo deum timeamus et diligamus, adque omnem spem cordis et animi in manus misericordie dei iugiter dirigamus. Optine nobis pie pastor a domino de preteritis indulgentiam, de presentibus ueniam, et de futuris emendata, et ut dominus noster ad se conuertat desyderium uero et uoluntatem, nosque pie foueat et misericorditer consoletur. Tu pius adsiste interuentor, itemque te rogamus, ianitor celi, ut semper nos in hac uita custodias et in die mortis nostrae ab inimicis eripias ac ianuam uitae nobis aperias, ubi ad contemplationem uisionis dei nos introducas. Annuente domino qui uiuit et regnat per omnia secula seculorum amen.[75]

77r–v two additions from the early twelfth century.

77r Notated Benedicamus domino song: Splendor patris et sol iustitie fit particeps nostre materie intrat uentre sed sine semine. Egreditur ex matre uirgine, Ergo benedicamus domino. Hic egressus et haec egressio deitatis fiunt probatio. Probat namque matris integritatis quod filius eius est deitas. Ergo deo dicamus gratias. Benedicamus domino. Orthodoxorum cetus cherichorum iubilio. Deo dicamus gratia.[76]

77v Eighth responsory for Matins of Apostles: Isti sunt uiri sancti quos elegit dominus in caritate non ficta et dedit illi gloriam sempiternam. Quorum doctrina fulget aecclesia ut sol et luna. V. Sancti per fidem iucerunt regna operari iustitia.

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[75] This text is apparently unique.

[76] This text is also found, with a different melody, on fol. 134r of Madrid, BN 289, a Siculo-Norman manuscript copied in the second third of the twelfth century, probably at Siracusa. On both compositions and their contexts see Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, 219–26.

78r Oportet me omnia ad quae missus sum hic explere et postea quam compleuero, recipi me ab eo quo missus sum patri. Cum ergo fuero assumptus, mittam tibi aliquem ex discipulis meis, qui curet egritudinem et ciuitatem tuam quae uocatur edissa, ne ullus inimicus preualeat aduersus eam. Scriptum est enim de me, quia beati qui non uiderunt et crediderunt. Item beati qui me uiderunt, et crediderunt. Quoniam non me uidisti, et credidisti, parata christi tibi saluatio et domui tuae. Etenim inclinaui cælos et descendi propter genus humanum. Habitaui autem uirginale habitaculum, quatenus transgressione facta in paradyso delerem. Memetipsum humiliaui ut uos exaltem. Ista autem mea epistola ubicumque posita fuerit, aut in iudicio, aut in uia, aut in mari, aut febricitantibus, aut frigore trementibus, aut maleficio calentibus, aut demoniacis, aut aliquibus dissimilibus salutem prebebit. Sit autem qui ea induitur castus, et ab omni re mala sublatus, et ducat ea quae est in sanitate, et gaudio ueritatis, quae tota est scriptura manuum mearum. Designaui autem istam epistolam septem signis subscriptis, signa signorum domini nostri ihesu christi.[77]

78v Mensuram longitudinis christi ad eius formam corporis factam. In quaecumque die uideris non iugie laberis nec morte subitanea peribis. Haec linea sedecies ducta monstrat mensuram longitudinis christi. Si quis eum perspexerit dicendo orationem dominicam non illo die armis morietur. Christus regnat, Christus imperat, Christus liberet me ab omni periculo, per omnia secula seculorum.[78]

Versus siluii de cognomento saluatoris.
Spes, ratio, uita, Salus, Sapientia,
Lumen, Iudex, Porta, Gigas, Rex, Gemma,
Propheta, Sacerdos, Messias, Sabaoth,
Rabbi, Sponsus, mediator, uirga, Columna,
Manus, petra, filius, immanuhelque uinea,
Pastor, ouis, Pax, Radix, uitis, oliua,

[77] This text appears also in Vatican City, BAV Vat. lat. 644, fol. 11r, as an eleventh-century addition, preceded by the rubric: "Epistula domini nostri nostri ihesu christi abgaro regi remissa. Exemplum rescripti ab ihesu per ananiam cursorem ad abgarum toparcham."

[78] This text is apparently unique.

Fons, paries, agnus, uitulus, leo, propitiator,
uerbum, homo, rete, lapis, domus, omnia, christus iesus.[79]

79r *Orationes ad crucem salutandam in parasceue, aliisque temporibus dicente. Prima uice petendo uenia[m] dicat has orationes.* Domine ihesu christe conditor mundi, qui cum sis splendor gloriæ et coeternus et coequalis patri sanctoque spiritui, ideo dignatus es carnem ex immaculata uirgine sumere, et gloriosas palmas. In crucis patibulo permisisti configere, ut claustra dissipares inferni, et humanum genus liberares de morte. Miserere mihi oppresso facinore ac pondere nequitiarum multarum. Iam non me digneris derelinquere piissime pater sed indulge quod impie gessi. Exaudi me prostratum coram adoranda gloriossisima cruce tua ut in
79v his diebus merear tibi assistere mundus et placere tuo conspectui ut liberatus a malis omnibus tuo sum semper domine adiutorio consolatus per te ihesu christe saluator mundi.[80]

Alia oratio Domine ihesu christe deus uerus de deo uero qui pro redemptione generis humani serpentina suasione decepti mundum erroribus implicatum illuminare et crucis patibulum subire uoluisti. Ut et lignum ligno uinceres et peccati hereditariam mortem, morte potentissima superares. Exaudi me miserum et indignum prostratum ante oculos tuæ benignissime maiestatis et adorantem te, et benedictentem nomen tuum semper atque terribile, et concede mihi te puro corde sapere, te
80r laudare, te predicare, et per uexillum huius sanctæ crucis quam hodie in tuo nomine adoraturus adueni, mentem meam corpusque sanctifica, scuto fidei tuæ me circumtege, galeam salutis mihi imponem, gladio spirituali accinge. Ut contra hostem nequissimum bellaturus, et tuæ muniar miserationis auxilio, et salutifere crucix uexillo cunctique tuo sancto nomine insignati ab hostis perfidis sim incursione securi. Per te christe ihesu saluator mundi, qui uiuis et regnas.

Alia oratio Deus qui moysi famulo tuo in uia squalentis heremi serpentem aeneum in media populi multitudine ad liberandas letali uiro
80v infectas animas exaltare iussisti. Ut si quis mortifere uulnere inflictus ad eum respiceret et uenenum exitiale euaderet, et optare salutis uiam adipisceretur. Significans te ipsum futura longe post curricula, pro tui salute plasmatis crucis extollendum patibulo. Ut quos diabolus armis

[79] *Anthologia Latina siue poesis latinae supplementum*, Pars Prior: *Carmina in codicibus scripta*, ed. Alexander Riese, Fasciculus II: *Reliquorum Librorum Carmina*, no. 689a (Leipzig, 1870), p. 149; also edited in PL 13.378.

[80] Ed. Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 13–14.

inuidiæ captiuerat, tua desiderabilis passio ad patriam reuocaret. Concede tam mihi misero et peccatori quam omnibus tuo cruore mercatis qui hodie sanctam passionem tuam supplices uenerantur, lignumque uitæ adorant. Ut diabolicas insidas te adiuuante uincamus, et eternæ uitæ participes esse mereamur. Qui cum patre.

81r *Alia oratio* Domine ihesu christe qui nos per crucis passionem hodierna die de diabolica seruitute liberasti, ut quo die hominem condideras, eodem et reformares, exaudi me miserum et peccatorem, coram hoc signaculo crucis confitentem et deprecantem, ut huius uenerabilis et uitalis ligni tuitione munitus et hostis neqissimi ignea tela repellere, et ab inflictis euacuare uulneribus et ad uitam aeternam ualeam peruenire. Per te saluator mundi qui cum patre.[81]

Istas orationes sanctas uice ueniam petendo. Crucem tuam adoro domine per quam saluasti mundum, salua animam meam et corpus meum quia tibi
81v soli peccaui christe saluator mundi quia pretioso sanguine tuo a morte perpetua mundum redemisti, per sanctæ crucis patibulum ne tradideris me miserum in mortem aeternam, nec in manus persequentium et calumpniantium me, sed per uexillum sancte crucis ab omnibus hostibus meis uisibilibus me semper hic et ubique defende. Saluator mundi quicum patre et spiritu sancto uiuis et regnas deus.[82]

Alia oratio Exaudi me domine prostratum ad adorandum tuam sanctam ac gloriosissimam crucem, ut his sollempnitatibus tibi merear adsistere mundus, et placere tuis conspectibus. Quatinus a malis omnibus exutus tua semper protectione sim consolatus deus noster. Qui uiuis et regnas.

82r *Alia oratio* Exurge domine qui iudicas terram et brachio fortitudinis suæ rege, quos tropheo crucis dignatus es comparare ac pro quibus effusio sacri sanguinis extat redemptio, hos de gehenne ardoribus erue, et gloriosa resurrectione fieri presta consortes. Qui uiuis et regnas.

Alia oratio Protege me domine peccatorem famulum tuum per signum istius sante crucis, ab omnibus insidiis inimicorum meorum uisibilium et inuisibilium ut tibi gratam exhibeam seruitutem et acceptabile tibi fiat sacrificium meum.

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[81] These four prayers are edited in Wilmart, "Prières médiévales," 33–35.

[82] Edited with the seven prayers following in Wilmart, "Prières médiévales," 35–37.

Alia oratio Sanctifica me domine signaculo sancte crucis, ut fiat mihi obstaculum contra seua iacula inimicorum meorum. Defende me domine et per lignum sanctum et per pretium iusti sanguinis tui cum quo me miserum redemisti.

Alia oratio Deus cui cunctæ obediunt creaturæ, et omnia in uerbo tuo fecisti in sapientia, supplices quesumus ineffabilem clementiam tuam, ut quos per lignum sanctæ crucis filii tui pio cruore es dignatus redimere, tu qui es lignum uitæ paradisique reparator, omnibus in te credentibus dira serpentis uenena extingue, et per gratiam spiritus sancti poculum salutis semper infunde. Per.

Alia oratio Inmense pietatis deus, qui latronem per confessionem eadem qua suspensus es die cruce in paradysum transtulisti, transfer a me iniquitates meas et heredem me celestium bonorum esse concede. Qui uiuis.

Alia oratio Adoro te domine ihesu christe in crucem ascendentem, deprecor te ut ipsa crux liberet me de angelo percutiente. Adoro te uulneratum in cruce, deprecor te ut tua uulnera remedium sint animæ meæ. Adoro te mortuum et sepultum, deprecor te ut tua mors sit uita mea. Adoro te descendentem ad inferos liberantem captiuos, deprecor te ut non me dimittas ibidem introire. Adoro te resurgentem a mortuis, ascendentem ad celos, sedentem ad dexteram patris. Precor te miserere mihi. Adoro te saluatorem uenturum et iudicaturum, deprecor te ut in tuo aduentu non intres in iudicium cum me peccantem, sed ante dimittas quam iudices. Qui.[83]

Has tres orationes sequentes tertia uice ueniam petendo.
Domine ihesu christe qui pro nobis crucis et mortis patibulum subisti, ut mortem sanares, et diaboli expelleres potestatem, et sanguinis tui pretio nos liberares, miserere mihi humillimo seruo tuo, et ueniam mihi peccatorum meorum tribue, meque coram adoranda cruce tua prostratum, ab omnibus malis eripe, bonis tuis misericorditer refice. Qui uiuis.[84]

Alia oratio Domine ihesu christe rex glorie, qui salutare patibulum crucis pro mundi salute subisti, et sanctas tuas palmas clauorum fixure

[83] Salmon 271.
[84] Ed. Wilmart, "Prières médiévales," pp. 37–8 with the three prayers following.

extendisti, ex et tuo latere sacratissimo pretiosi sanguinis unda nostrorum uulnera peccatorum purgasti, da mihi peccatori triumphalis crucis imaginem portare, ut cum omnibus sanctis tuis que sit latitudo et longitudo profundum quique et alitudo, ualeam comprehendere ut ab omnibus malis peccatorum emundari, ac per uexillum sancte crucis contra omnia aduersa muniri.

Alia oratio Domine ihesu christe qui temetipsum pro redemptione generis humani morti in crucis patibulo tradidisti, ut mortem nostram tua mortem superares, et uitae nobis perpetuæ ianuas reserare. Tu christe domine quem adorat omnis creatura tua, uisibilis et inuisibilis cui flectitur omne genu celestium, terrestrium et infernorum, qui nos famulos tuos his celebrandis recolendisque mysteriis incolomes representas, exaudi me propitius humillimum famulum tuum, coram adoranda cruce tua prostratum, clementer et misericorditer respice, esto propitius peccatis et offensionibus meis, et omnes culpas meas tua pietate cooperi, et multitudinem magnitudinemque peccatorum meorum magnitudo clementiæ tuæ superet, et quicquid transacti anni spatium coram tuæ maiestate deliqui, indulgentiam misericordissima dele, atque ad tuam clementiam fac me pertingere et in conspectu tuo placere concede. Qui uiuis.

Ad crucifixi pedes ueniens, terramque osculans hanc oratio humiliter dic.
Deus qui unigeniti filii tui domini nostri Ihesu Christi pretioso sanguine humanum genus redimere dignatus es, concede propitius ut qui ad adorandam uiuificam eius crucem aduenio, a pecctorum meorum nexibus liberere. Per eundem.

In osculatione unius pedis dicatur: Crux mihi certa salus, Crux domini mecum.

Ad alterum pedem: Crux mihi refugium.

Unam manum osculans, Crux mihi uera sit defensio.

Altram manum osculans: quam semper adoro.[85]

Oratio ad sanctam crucem postquam surrexerit: Signum sanctæ crucis defendat nos ab omnibus malis, preteritis, presentibus, et futuris, exterioribus et interioribus, per signum sanctæ crucis ab omni persecutione diaboli

[85] Ed. Wilmart, "Prières médiévales," p. 38. In MGH *Poetae Latini aeui carolini*, ed. Ernest Dümmler (Berlin, 1884), II, p. 257, the prayer is edited as a dubious work of Rabanus Maurus. For more on this text see Boynton, *Shaping a Monastic Identity*, pp. 100–101.

liberemur huius signaculo prosternantur aduersarii, effugentur demonia, per istius crucis signum a periculis mundi saluemur. Prelietur pro nobis michahel, qui uicto dracone, in milibus angelorum omnipotenti deo laudem dixit. Intercedat pro nobis sanctus gabrihel qui salutem mundo nuntauit. Assit nobis sanctus raphahel, tribuens medicinam quam mundi auctor attulit. Auxilietur nobis uirgo sanctissima maria, genitrix domini nostri ihesu christi, cum omnibus sanctis uirginibus. Orent pro nobis omnes sancti apostoli principes, potestatem habentes dimittendi peccata. Adiuuentur nos omnes sancti martires; uictores diaboli, triumphatores christi. Assint nobis omnes sancti confessores, Orantes pro nobis ad dominum nostrum ihesum christum, in eius sancto nomine liberentur corda et corpora nostra ab omni persecutione diaboli in sempiternum. Amen.[86]

Alia oratio Domine Ihesu Christe qui celum et terra fecisti in uniuersum mundum pugillo conclusisti. Genus humanum suscepisti. Patibulum crucis sustinuisti. Totum mundum a peccato redemisti. Potestatem diaboli destruxisti. Regnum tuum te querentibus promisisti. Respice in me et miserere mei, quia sic sunt peccata mea sicut stellas cæli, quas dinumerare nullus potest. Presta mihi spatium penitendi et numquam iterum faciendi, et quomodo fuit intentio peccandi. Ita sit possibilitas emendandi. Da mihi ignem amores tui, spem fidem caritatem, humilitatem, dilectionem inimicorum patientiam. Mansuetudinem, concordiam in omnibus ut possim hostem inuisibilem uel uisibilem uincere per caritatis uinculum. Saluator.

Alia oratio Sancta crux christi per te redemptus sum per te merear ueniam et indulgentiam recipere de meis peccatis. Sancta crux salua me quia in te passus est saluator mundi deus. Salua me christe saluator per uirtutem crucis qui saluasti petrum in mare miserere mei. Crux domini mei sit mecum. Crux domini mei est quam ego semper adoro. Crux mihi salus. Crux mihi refrigerium. Cruxi mihi defensio. Crux mihi uita. Crux mihi protectio et adiutorium in presenti uita et in futuro iudicio. Per.

Alia oratio Domine ihesu christe uexillum sanctæ crucis tuæ adoro ut per uirtutem illam quam in ea operatus es, animam meam et corpus

[86] Ed. Wilmart, "Prières médiévales," 39–40, with the five prayers following.

meum ab omni periculo, ab omni malo, ab omni scandalo, ab omni tribulatione, ab omni persecutione et infestatione inimici saluare digneris. Per dominum.

Alia oratio Domine ihesu christe qui manus in cruce posuisti, et de tuo pretioso sanguine redemisti. Domine da mihi usum patientiam, abstinentiam, lumen, sensum, intellectum, scientiam ueram, et bonam perseuerantiam usque in finem. Amen.

Alia oratio O crux benedicta, redemptio nostra, liberatio nostra, salus nostra, restauratio nostra, signum salutis nostræ, ineffabilis uirtus, ineffabilis medela, incomprehensibilis uictoria, inter omnia ligna paradysi gloriosior, pulchrior, excelsior, adoratior, suauior, dulcior, obsecro te per dominum nostrum ihesum christum qui pependit in te pro salute nostra, ut semper adsis mihi. Ad adiutorium, ad consolationem, ad custodiam, ad defensionem, ad euadendum omnia mala. Utinam domina te incessanter habeam per oculis. Quod si fragilitate mea impediar, tanta sit clementia tua circa me, ut quotienscumque te inuocauero, aut in angustia, aut pro peccatis meis, aut in qualicumque necessitate…[87]

[87] Text incomplete because most of the next folio has been cut.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THOMAS AQUINAS ON CHRIST'S PRAYER

Corey Barnes

Thomas Aquinas believed that Jesus Christ provided a model (*exemplum*) for prayer.[1] The most obvious examples of such modeling are the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13, Luke 11:2–4) and Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39, Mark 14:36, Luke 22:42). These prayers teach prayer. Examining Thomas Aquinas on Christ's prayer clarifies Thomas' understanding of prayer in general. Thomas' understanding of prayer in general likewise clarifies his presentation of Christ's prayer.

This article will investigate prayer in Aquinas, focusing on Christ's prayer. This topic and this focus, though superficially simple, require brief treatment of several intertwined issues. Thomas' spirituality is deeply rooted in his theology.[2] Prayer serves a specific function as

[1] Christ provided a model as an *exemplum* (as distinct from an *exemplar*). Ryan notes that in Aquinas' "treatment of prayer as example, Thomas articulates a feature of 'exemplum' that would seem to be obvious but that he does not always address directly. Namely, an example implies two moments: model and response. Christ's example of prayer, for instance, invites a human response" (Thomas Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms* (Notre Dame, IN, 2000), p. 95). "Like an 'exemplar,' an 'exemplum' provides a model, but it is not one of which someone or something participates. It is one which someone *chooses* to follow. As a result, 'exemplum' does not, in the first instance, imply the passive reception of some ontological or quasi-ontological effect but the active choice to imitate a concrete historical model" (Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*, p. 96). Ryan develops at length Thomas' Christological interpretation of the Psalms.

[2] The fullest treatment of Thomas' spirituality is Jean-Pierre Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas, Vol. 2: Spiritual Master*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C., 2003). Torrell notes the connection of theology and prayer for Aquinas: "Theological study demands the same faith as do Christian life and prayer. And though these are different activities, the same faith finds expression in them all. 'Contemplative prayer or theological speculation are specifically different variants in their psychological manifestations, but in theological structure, they have the same object, the same beginning, the same end.' This is why Thomas' Prologue to the *Sentences* says that for him who practices it, theology takes on the modality of prayer (*modus orationis*). There is no doubt that, for him, prayer belongs to the practice of theology," Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas, Vol. 2*, p. 17, quoting M.-D. Chenu, *La foi dans l'intelligence* (Paris, 1964), p. 134.

a secondary cause within the plan of divine providence and cannot be appreciated apart from God's providential ordering of creation. Prayer finds its highest expression in Jesus Christ, and understanding that expression demands basic understanding of Thomas' Christology. Aquinas' views on Christ's human perfection enrich the exemplary force of Christ's prayer. Specifying the interrelation of these issues highlights Aquinas' stress on the value of prayer.

This investigation will unfold in two parts. First, a summary of Thomas on the Lord's Prayer will introduce the topic of prayer in Aquinas and contextualize the questions and issues regarding Christ's prayer. This first part will draw material from the *Super Mattheum* and the *Summa theologiae*, late works expressing Thomas' mature views.[3] Emphasis will be placed on the relationship of prayer and providence and on what may be licitly petitioned. Second, the lessons gleaned from the summary of the Lord's Prayer will be applied to the specific case of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane as treated in *ST* 3.21.[4] Emphasis will be placed on Christ's prayer as a model. These parts together contribute to the overall picture of prayer in Aquinas.

The Lord's Prayer

Investigating Thomas on the Lord's Prayer provides a good introduction to prayer in Aquinas' theology. Even when not expressly commenting on the Lord's Prayer, Thomas' discussions of prayer reflect his views

[3] The date of Thomas' *Super Mattheum* has been a matter of some debate. For a defense of composition during Thomas' second Parisian regency (1268–1272), see Jean-Pierre Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas, Vol. 1: The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C., 1996), pp. 55–57.

[4] The focus here will be on Thomas' consideration of Christ's prayer at Gethsemane. It must be stressed also that Thomas interprets the Psalms in terms of Christ's prayer. "Applying similar reasoning to the claims contained in the prologue to the *Super Psalmos*, Christ as matter and prayer as form of the Psalms must be intimately linked. From this perspective then, the Psalms are not simply about Christ or prayer but about *Christ praying*. In terms of this hylomorphic analysis of the Psalms, any mention of Christ implies prayer and vice-versa. Thus, the goal of Thomas's pedagogy is not simply to produce students who are Christ-like but students who are Christ-like in prayer" (Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*, p. 108). Citations of the *Summa theologiae* will give the Part, the question, the article, and (unless the *corpus*) the part of the article. Citations of the *Prima pars*, the *Prima secundae pars*, and the *Tertia pars* of the *Summa* will be from *Summa Theologica*, trans. English Dominicans (New York, 1948). Citations of the *Secunda secundae pars* will be from Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas: Selected Writings* (New York, 1988).

on the Lord's Prayer. This is particularly true in the *Summa theologiae*. Thomas' discussion of prayer in the *Summa theologiae* (*ST* 2–2.83) is, with 17 articles, the longest question of the *Summa*. While only article nine directly concerns the Lord's Prayer, the topics of many other articles and their arrangement depend upon the Lord's Prayer. Comparing Thomas' commentary on the Lord's Prayer in his *Super Mattheum* with *ST* 2–2.83 reveals the pervasive influence of the Lord's Prayer on Thomas' theology of prayer.[5]

Aquinas interprets Matthew 6:5–8 as presenting the proper manner of prayer. In Matthew 6:9–13 Jesus teaches "what we ought to ask for in prayer. And in this connection he does two things: first, he gives the title of the prayer, then he proposes the prayer itself" (*Super Mattheum* 6:9–15).[6] Before Thomas exegetes the title and petitions of the prayer, he comments upon its exemplary force. No necessity constrains prayers to follow this exact formulation. Jesus says "You shall pray like this" (Matthew 6:9). There are, however, three qualities that recommend this prayer: "brevity, completeness, and effectiveness."[7] Its brevity allows anyone to learn this prayer. It contains completely everything that we can rightly petition. It is effective due both to its completeness and to the authority of its author. The second quality most concerns the present investigation.

Before proceeding, it will be useful to clarify Thomas' basic framing of prayer. Prayer, Aquinas tells us, is an act not of the appetitive power

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[5] Worth noting too is the treatment of prayer in the *Compendium theologiae*. Thomas again examines the Lord's Prayer as instructive of true prayer. Perhaps more interesting is that the *Compendium* organizes prayer under the topic of hope. Thomas, in *Compendium theologiae* 2.3, analyzes the Lord's Prayer to make clear in whom we ought to place our hope, what should be the cause of our hope, and for what we should hope. *Compendium theologiae*, trans. Cyril Vollert (St. Louis, MO, 1948).

[6] The title of the prayer (*titulus orationis*) is, of course, "Our Father who art in heaven." Tugwell interprets *titulus orationis* to mean the status of the prayer since Thomas discusses "Our Father who art in heaven" as part of the prayer itself (Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, p. 454, n.48). I would suggest that, while it may be part of the prayer itself, it is the title of the prayer as introducing and preparing for the petitions. Aquinas elsewhere notes that the distinction between simple petitions and prayers is that prayers are petitions directed toward God (cf. *Compendium theologiae* 2.7: "If he hopes to receive such a benefit from a man, his request is called a simple petition; if he hopes to obtain favor from God, it is called prayer"). Citations of *Super Mattheum* 6 are from Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*.

[7] Tugwell notes that these three qualities correspond roughly to the five qualities identified by William Peraldus' "Sermon on Prayer" (Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, p. 455, n. 52) For Peraldus' "Sermon on Prayer," see Simon Tugwell, *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings* (New York, 1982), pp. 165–177.

but of practical reason. The practical differs from the speculative reason in that it not only apprehends but also causes its object. This can happen either perfectly, when the act of practical reason necessitates its effect, or imperfectly, when the act of practical reason disposes to the effect (*ST* 2–2.83.1). Thomas labels this perfect causation "commanding" and the imperfect "beseeching" or "asking." Prayer exemplifies this imperfect causation, primarily as petition.[8] The preeminent, though unique, example of this perfect causality is God's act of creation. God's act of creation was not simply an initiatory act but is also an act of governance, of the constant maintenance of creation. God creates and maintains according to the divine wisdom. God's wise design in and for creation is providence. Thomas addresses the relation between God's perfect causation and the imperfect causation of prayer in *ST* 2–2.83.2.

In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, Thomas discusses prayer under the heading of providence (*SCG* 3.95–96).[9] The *Summa theologiae*, on the other hand, treats providence in *ST* 1.22 and treats prayer much later in *ST* 2–2.83. The distance between these questions does not lessen their connection. A correct understanding of providence reinforces the value

[8] Scholars disagree on to what extent Thomas' notion of prayer includes more than prayer as petition. Tugwell argues that, during the medieval period, the word "prayer" was stretched from its original meaning of petition to include a far broader range of activities. In its broadest sense, prayer was said to include any good deed. Tugwell holds that, in the *Summa*, Aquinas no longer regards prayer in a broad sense, as he perhaps did in the *Scriptum* on the Lombard's *Sentences*, but rather identifies prayer with petition. See Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, pp. 273–279; see also Simon Tugwell, "Prayer, Humpty Dumpty and Thomas Aquinas," in *Language, Meaning, and God: essays in honor of Herbert McCabe OP*, ed. Brian Davies (London, 1987), pp. 24–50. Ryan presents Thomas' notion of prayer in a less restrictive fashion, arguing that in the *Summa* prayer encompasses good works (Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*, pp. 68–69, 124). Ryan cites in support of his view Lydia Maidl, *Desiderii interpres: Genese und Grundstruktur der Gebetstheologie des Thomas von Aquin* (Paderborn, 1994), pp. 283, 288, 339, though Maidl seems to consider prayer in Thomas normally to indicate petition (Maidl, *Desiderii interpres*, p. 299). The intimate connection drawn by Aquinas between prayer and providence suggests that prayer fundamentally means "petition" for the Angelic Doctor. Prayer as "thanksgiving" or as contemplation or even as "any good deed" would not require any reconciliation or harmonization with providence. So, Thomas' efforts to demonstrate the harmony and utility of prayer in the context of providence support petition as the primary sense of prayer. Tugwell notes that the connection of prayer and predestination had dropped out of consideration between the time of Origen and Thomas: "In the commentary on *The Sentences*, Thomas has not yet brought it back into the picture, but in the *Contra Gentiles* it is right in the forefront in the chapters on prayer, and thereafter it remains an integral element in Thomas' doctrine of prayer" (Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, p. 276).

[9] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame, IN, 1975).

of prayer. A correct understanding of prayer clarifies the meaning of providence. In his *Super Mattheum*, Thomas argues that "Our Father" at the beginning of the Lord's Prayer eliminates erroneous conceptions of providence and prayer. While the *Summa* does not make explicit the connection between "Our Father" and the issue of providence, it treats the same three erroneous views as the *Super Mattheum* and treats them as preparatory for discussion of the petitions found in the Lord's Prayer.

Thomas conceives providence as comprehensive, as guiding all creatures to their proper end (*ST* 1.22, prologue). As Thomas notes in *ST* 2–2.83.2, many have, based upon a false understanding of providence, confused the utility of prayer. There were three main types of confusion. Some denied that divine providence orders human affairs. Others affirmed that everything happens of necessity. Both of these opinions deny the utility of prayer. Contradicting these opinions does not enough. Aquinas notes a third opinion that avoids the errors of the first two but errs in locating the utility of prayer in a changeable divine providence. That is, the opinion holds that prayer is useful because it can change divine providence. A correct appreciation of prayer requires a correct appreciation of providence. Aquinas' teaching on providence pervades his theology, which makes difficult the task of an adequate summary. The remarks here will attempt not an adequate but only a relevant summary with respect to prayer.

Created things participate in the good not only in terms of substance but also in terms of their order to an end. Creation does not lack purpose, neither on the universal nor on the individual scale. The model or determination for this purpose rests in the divine wisdom and is commonly called providence (the *ratio ordinis rerum in finem*). God's providential ordering extends not simply to universals or species but even to individuals.[10] All things are caused by God; everything that exists participates in God's existence and as a result falls within the domain of providence.[11] This is no less true for all acts of a created

[10] "We must say, however, that all things are subject to divine providence, not only in general but also in their own individual selves" (*ST* 1.22.2).

[11] "But the causality of God, who is the first agent, extends to all being, not only as to constituent principles of species, but also as to the individualizing principles; not only of things incorruptible, but also of things corruptible. Hence all things that exist in whatsoever manner are necessarily directed by God towards some end; as the Apostle says: *Those things that are of God are well ordered* (Romans 13:1). Since, therefore, as the providence of God is nothing less than the type of the order of things towards an

free will. Any creature's exercise of free will ultimately rests upon God as cause.[12] Rational creatures exercise free will within the divine plan for creation. Providence orders every individual aspect of creation to its proper end. God so ordered creation that the execution of this divine plan unfolds through secondary causes (*ST* 1.22.3). Secondary causality is created causality. The divine causality achieves its purpose through the causality of intermediaries. This bestows a dignity upon the intermediaries, especially in the case of rational creatures.[13]

Rational creatures exercise a particular type of secondary causality, one that entails freedom and hence responsibility. The compatibility of human freedom and divine providence has often been challenged and has rarely found a defender as articulate as Thomas. According to Thomas, God causes every event within creation, but God's causality does not impose necessity upon every event. Some things do happen contingently through the operation of a free will. Providence does not eliminate human freedom, nor does human freedom in any way limit providence. To untangle this conundrum, it is useful to distinguish two levels of discourse, each corresponding to a level of causality. God causes every event to happen infallibly. God causes some events to happen infallibly and *necessarily* but causes other events to happen infallibly and *contingently*. Infallibly refers to God's causality, which operates in a mode transcending all created forms of understanding. Necessarily and contingently refer to the level of secondary causality. An event happens necessarily or contingently according as it has a necessary or contingent cause on the created level. These adverbs modify created actions. Infallibly modifies the divine action.

God has so ordered creation that human beings can freely cooperate with the divine plan. Human beings can freely pursue their providential end. This freedom entails great dignity and responsibility. It not only

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end, as we have said; it necessarily follows that all things inasmuch as they participate in existence, must likewise be subject to divine providence" (*ST* 1.22.2).

[12] "But since the very act of free will is traced to God as to a cause, it necessarily follows that everything happening from the exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence. For human providence is included under the providence of God, as a particular under a universal cause" (*ST* 1.22.2, *ad* 4).

[13] "Pareillement l'action de Dieu ne limite pas la liberté de l'homme, mais, après avoir créé l'homme libre, à son image, Dieu l'associe à l'œuvre de la Providence d'une façon spéciale, grace à sa liberté, qui la rend capable de collaborer à la realization des desseins divins, en les connaissant et en les aimant," S. Pinckaers, *La prière chrétienne* (Fribourg, 1989), p. 194. For Pinckaers's discussion of prayer and providence, see pp. 172–212.

allows for but even stresses the utility of prayer.[14] Secondary causes make a proper contribution to the unfolding of divine providence on the created level.[15] Prayer exercises its own true causality. Merit and impetration are the two main effects of prayer; these effects do not necessarily coincide.[16] These few remarks hopefully suffice to introduce prayer as a secondary cause within God's providential plan for creation.

Prayer should be directed to God alone as to the one who fulfills prayer (*ST* 2–2.83.4). Aquinas notes also that prayer "ought to aim ultimately at the acquisition of grace and glory" (*ST* 2–2.83.4).[17] Articles five and six of *ST* 2–2.83 address the attendant issues of whether this ultimate aim permits praying for any definite or particular things or for temporal things. Given our limited and fallible intellects, how can human beings fittingly petition for particular things? Without certainty that this particular thing contributes to the acquisition of grace and glory, how can anyone fittingly ask for it? As Thomas notes, "Knowing what we ought to ask for is extremely difficult, as is knowing what we

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[14] Thomas makes the point in the *Summa contra Gentiles*. "Therefore, it is appropriate to divine providence for Him to fulfill the desires of a rational creature when they are presented to Him through prayer" (*SCG* 3.95). Readers of Aquinas have also indicated this. "Prayer is precisely a cause ordained to produce this effect, the obtaining of God's gifts necessary or useful for salvation" (Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christian Perfection and Contemplation: according to St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John of the Cross*, trans. M. Timothea Doyle (St. Louis, MO, 1949), p. 201. "C'est donne la Providence elle-même qui fonde le pouvoir de la prière, qui le lui accorde et le rend plus vaste que celui de nos autres actions, limitées par nos forces. On peut ainsi dire: mieux on reconnaît l'action de la Providence et plus on perçoit quelle est la force de la prière. Et aussi: plus on fait l'expérience du pouvoir de la prière et mieux on découvre l'œuvre de la Providence" (Pinckaers, *La prière chrétienne*, p. 196). For a presentation of the philosophical difficulties involved in petitionary prayer and a critique of Thomas' solution to those difficulties, see Eleonore Stump, "Petitionary Prayer," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (1979), 81–91.

[15] "And thus, secondary causes are not incompatible with providence; instead, they carry out the effect of providence. In this way, then, prayers are efficacious before God, yet they do not destroy the immutable order of divine providence, because this individual request that is granted to a certain petitioner falls under the order of divine providence" (*SCG* 3.96).

[16] On merit in Aquinas' theology, see Joseph Wawrykow, *God's Grace and Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN, 1995). Prayer leads to merit insofar as it is an act of charity. Impetration, or the attainment of what is petitioned, is the proper effect of prayer (*ST* 2–2.83.13).

[17] Maidl adds specification to this, particularly as related to Christ's exemplarity. "Stellvertretend und exemplarisch bringt Christus zum Ausdruck, wonach jeder Mensch in seinem Beten streben sollte. Das Beten des Christen um Beharrlichkeit (*perseverentia*), Heiligung (*sanctificatio*) und das ewige Leben (*via aeterna*) ist zu betrachten als persönliche Aneignung der Fürbitte Christi" (Maidl, *Desiderii interpres*, p. 312).

ought to desire" (*Super Mattheum*, 6:9–15). The *sed contra* of *ST* 2–2.83.5 notes simply the authority of the Lord in setting down definite petitions (Matthew 6:9–15; Luke 11). The Lord's Prayer provides here not just an authority but also a model for Thomas' response. Thomas grants the force of the objections when applied to particular things, such as wealth, that can be used for either good or evil. "But," Thomas continues, "there are some things which we cannot use badly, things which cannot turn out badly: the things by which we are made blessed or by which we earn beatitude" (*ST* 2–2.83.5). Meriting beatitude through the movement of grace cannot turn out badly or be misused. Thomas writes that when "we ask for things in prayer which are relevant to our salvation, then we are conforming our wills to the will of God" (*ST* 2–2.83.5, *ad* 2).[18] The importance of conforming the human will to the divine will surfaces again in Aquinas' discussion of Christ's prayer (*ST* 3.21).

Article six repeats much from article five but from a different perspective. Article five concentrated on particular "things which we cannot use badly, things which cannot turn out badly" (*ST* 2–2.83.5). These are things directly and *immediately* relevant to salvation. Article six widens the focus to include things that we can use badly, things that are directly and *instrumentally* relevant to salvation. Quoting, paraphrasing, and extrapolating from Augustine, Thomas argues the lawfulness of petitioning temporal goods given certain circumstances pertaining to the lawful use of temporal goods. One may licitly petition those temporal goods that may be licitly desired. The temporal goods licitly desired include those that provide for a virtuous life on the path toward

[18] Article five provides little detail as to what exactly are the things 'relevant to our salvation.' Thomas leaves the matter vague, noting simply that the Spirit "helps our weakness by inspiring us with holy desires and so making us plead rightly" (*ST* 2–2.83.5, *ad* 1). In the *Prima secundae pars*, Thomas defines merit with respect to charity: "As we may gather from what has been stated above (A.1) human acts have the nature of merit from two causes:—first and chiefly from the Divine ordination, inasmuch as acts are said to merit that good to which man is divinely ordained. Secondly, on the part of freewill, inasmuch as man, more than other creatures, has the power of voluntary acts by acting of himself. And in both these ways does merit chiefly rest with charity. For we must bear in mind that everlasting life consists in the enjoyment of God. Now the human mind's movement to the fruition of the Divine good is the proper act of charity, whereby all the acts of the other virtues are ordained to this end, since all the other virtues are commanded by charity" (*ST* 1–2.114.4). Thomas discusses charity at length in *ST* 2–2.23–46. Readers of *ST* 2–2.83 would be familiar with the earlier discussions of merit and charity.

beatitude. These temporal goods assist in meriting.[19] Correct petition follows correct desire. Correct desire is ordered to correct use in the pursuit of beatitude. Thomas established earlier that prayer serves a true causal role and should be directed to the acquisition of beatitude. This conviction allows Thomas to legitimate prayer for all those things (particular and temporal things included) that promote the journey to beatitude.[20] Thomas carries this logic out in greatest detail in *ST* 2–2.83.9 on the petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

The objections in article nine criticize various petitions in the Lord's Prayer or the order of the petitions. The *sed contra* affirms the authority of Christ as sufficient to justify the petitions and their order. Aquinas' response explains the logic behind this authority by recalling the relationship of petition to beatitude: "Because prayer is a kind of presentation of our desire before God, we can only rightly pray for what we can rightly desire, we also pray for things in the order in which they should be desired" (*ST* 2–2.83.9). This explains the logic of the individual petitions and their arrangement. Thomas reasons that the Lord's Prayer "not only instructs our pleading, it also gives shape to our whole affective life [*informativa totius nostri affectus*]" (*ST* 2–2.83.9).[21]

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[19] Thomas discusses the relationship of temporal goods to merit in *ST* 1–2.114.10. "What falls under merit is the reward or wage, which is a kind of good. Now man's good is twofold—the first, simply; the second, relatively. Now man's good simply is his last end, (according to Psalm 73:28: *But it is good for me to adhere to my God*), and consequently what is ordained and leads to this end; and these fall simply under merit. But the relative, not the simple, good of man is what is good to him now, or what is a good to him relatively; and this does not fall under merit simply, but relatively.

"Hence we must say that if temporal goods are considered as they are useful for virtuous works, whereby we are led to heaven, they fall directly and simply under merit, even as increase of grace, and everything whereby a man is helped to attain beatitude after the first grace. For God gives men, both just and wicked, enough temporal goods to enable them to attain to everlasting life; and thus these temporal goods are simply good. Hence it is written (Psalm 34:10): *For there is no want to them that fear Him*, and again, Psalm 37:25: *I have not seen the just forsaken*, etc.

"But if these temporal goods are considered in themselves, they are not man's good simply, but relatively, and thus they do not fall under merit simply, but relatively, inasmuch as men are moved by God to do temporal works, in which with God's help they reach their purpose. And thus as life everlasting is simply the reward of the works of justice in relation to the Divine motion, as stated above (AA.3, 6), so have temporal goods, considered in themselves, the nature of reward, with respect to the Divine motion, whereby men's wills are moved to undertake these works, even though, sometimes, men have not a right intention in them" (*ST* 1–2.114.10).

[20] It is worth mentioning that Aquinas favors the image of life as a journey toward God as our ultimate end. The sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and prayer promote and assist in this journey.

[21] For more on this theme, see Maidl, *Desiderii interpres*, pp. 214–216.

The Lord's Prayer teaches not only prayer but also the right desire grounding prayer. This insight allows Aquinas to treat the petitions of the Lord's Prayer in terms of the proper order of desire.

Thus far in *ST* 2–2.83, Thomas has specified the following aspects of prayer. Prayer is an interior act of religion directed to God alone as the one who fulfills the prayer. Prayer functions as a secondary cause within the plan of divine providence, disposing the one praying toward the fulfillment of the divine will. One may licitly pray for those things that may be licitly desired, including particular and temporal things. Thomas specifies these as the things whereby we merit beatitude and the things that assist in meriting beatitude. As article nine makes clear, the conditions of right prayer are preeminently displayed in the Lord's Prayer.

The desire for a particular goal leads to the desire for means to that goal. Thomas holds that "our goal is God" (*ST* 2–2.83.9) and that "our affection is directed to him in two ways: first, in the sense that we will his glory, and secondly, in the sense that we want to enjoy his glory" (*ST* 2–2.83.9). There are two aspects to our desire for God, God's own glory and our own beatitude as the enjoyment of God's beatitude. These two aspects correspond to the petitions 'Hallowed be thy name,' and 'Thy kingdom come.'[22] The remaining petitions concern the means to this goal. "There are," Thomas notes, "two ways in which something can set us on our way toward our goal: directly or incidentally [*per se* or *per accidens*]" (*ST* 2–2.83.9). The direct means can either be immediate or instrumental. The goods immediately relevant to achieving our goal are the things by which we merit beatitude. We petition the goods immediately relevant in the petition "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (cf. *ST* 2–2.83.5). The instrumental goods assist in meriting. The petition "Give us this day our daily bread" asks for these

[22] In the *Super Mattheum* 6, Thomas seems to regard "Our Father who art in heaven" as the *titulus orationis*. It prepares for the petitions by establishing a proper understanding of prayer within the plan of divine providence, raises hope, stimulates charity, invites to imitate God, and calls to humility (*Super Mattheum* 6:9–11). *ST* 2–2.83.9 discusses "Our Father who art in heaven" in reply to the fifth objection. Thomas notes that "Our Father who art in heaven" is fittingly placed before the petitions to arouse our confidence in God's will for our good and in God's excellence to provide our good. Article nine need spend little time on these points as they were firmly established in previous articles. It is worth noting that Thomas' systematic presentation of prayer follows the order of topics determined by the Lord's Prayer, as evidenced by his commentary on Matthew.

instrumental goods. Bread can here refer either to sacramental bread (and by extension to all the sacraments) or to bodily bread as symbolic of the necessities of life (cf. *ST* 2–2.83.6). The incidental means remove obstacles, "and there are three obstacles blocking our path toward beatitude," sin, temptation, and pain/punishment (*ST* 2–2.83.9). The removal of these obstacles is petitioned with "Forgive us our trespasses," "Lead us not into temptation," and "Deliver us from evil."

Aquinas' express treatment of the Lord's Prayer in *ST* 2–2.83.9 might appear unremarkable. Many of the ideas presented come from Augustine or the *Glossa ordinaria*. Thomas' *Super Mattheum* offers a more extensive discussion of these ideas. What is most noteworthy or remarkable, however, about the *Summa*'s presentation of the Lord's Prayer is its integration into the overall presentation of prayer. The points established in article nine (as well as points regarding the Lord's Prayer made by Aquinas' *Super Mattheum*) are foreshadowed in the earlier articles of *ST* 2–2.83.

This brief consideration of Thomas on the Lord's Prayer provides a working summary for Aquinas' general views on prayer. Aquinas' general views on prayer constitute the necessary background for correctly appreciating his views on Christ's prayer in *ST* 3.21. For all the length of *ST* 2–2.83 and all the specificity of the Lord's Prayer, the full force of Christ as *exemplum* is apparent only in the *Tertia pars*.

Christ's Prayer

The *Summa theologiae*'s treatise on Christ comprises the first 59 questions of the *Tertia pars* and is divided into two basic sections, on Christ himself (questions 1–26) and on those things that Christ did and suffered in the flesh, the *acta et passa Christi in carne* (questions 27–59). This second section represents a theological advancement in scholastic Christology, offering the novelty of a commentary on the gospel narrative based upon the theological specifications of the first section. Thomas analyzes Christ's prayer in question 21. This is interesting for at least two reasons. Thomas has changed the placement of this topic from his earlier *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. In the *Scriptum*, Thomas follows the Lombard in grouping together the topics of will and prayer in Christ. That Aquinas thought to move this question (separating it from *ST* 3.18 on Christ's two wills) is interesting enough, but where he chose to move it provides equal interest. Instead of including the question

on Christ's prayer within the section on Christ's life in this world (questions 40–45) or on Christ's passion (questions 46–49), Thomas selected to discuss Christ's prayer under the subheading of Christ in relation to the Father (questions 20–24). This placement stresses the exemplary force of Christ's prayer.[23]

Thomas discusses a threefold subjection of human nature to God, in degree of goodness, in power, and "through its proper act, inasmuch as by its own will it obeys God's command" (*ST* 3.20.1). Christ, Aquinas holds, attributes these three types of subjection to himself. The third type of subjection is particularly germane for consideration of Christ's prayer, because "prayer is the unfolding of our will to God, that God may fulfill it" (*ST* 3.21.1, referring back to *ST* 2–2.83.1–2). The express topic of *ST* 3.21.1 is whether it is fitting for Christ to pray. Thomas defends Christ's prayer as fitting both on the general grounds of the nature of prayer and on the specific grounds of Christ's perfect human nature.[24] Christ possessed both a human will and the divine

[23] Richard Schenk, "*Omnis Christi actio nostra est instructio*: The Deeds and Sayings of Jesus as Revelation in the view of Thomas Aquinas," *Studi tomistici* 37 (1990), 104–131. Schenk contextualizes Thomas' use of this 'common' authority (*omnis Christi actio nostra est instructio*), noting that the instruction does not always carry the exemplary force of a moral instruction for imitation. "Even where true exemplarity seems to be intended, such as in the prayer of Christ, the differences are noted: Differentia est enim inter orationem Christi et orationem nostram. Precisely because he was more than merely human, Christ enjoyed, according to Thomas, a far greater freedom than we, which makes it all the more likely that his recorded actions had a further purpose of instruction or redemption" (Schenk, "*Omnis Christi*," pp. 113–114). The case of prayer admits of many nuances. "Christ's prayer during his miracles or at times of relative solitude is meant not only as an example, but as proof of his true humanity; just as his *not* praying during miracles is said to be meant as a manifestation of his true divinity. Christ's praying and his *not* praying are for our instruction; and this in faith and not just in morals" (Schenk, "*Omnis Christi*," p. 114). For a more extensive treatment of the exemplary force of Christ's prayer, see Ryan, *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms*, pp. 61–105 and Maidl, *Desiderii interpres*, pp. 289–315.

[24] Thomas adheres to a classical understanding of the Incarnation. The person or hypostasis of the Word assumes to itself in hypostatic union a perfect human nature (*ST* 3.2). The Word assumes this human nature without loss to self or change (*ST* 3.1.1 *ad* 1). After the Incarnation, the Word remains fully divine and is also fully human, possessing all the features essential to human nature, such as a body and a rational soul complete with intellect and will (*ST* 3.5). For an insightful description of Thomas' Incarnational Christology, see Joseph Wawrykow, "Hypostatic Union," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, eds. Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow (Notre Dame, IN, 2005), pp. 222–251. Prayer, as indicated in *ST* 2–2.83, is an act of the practical intellect petitioning on behalf of desire. Christ as human possesses the requisite capacities (intellect and will) for true prayer. In *ST* 2–2.83.1 Thomas stresses prayer as an act of the practical intellect rather than of the appetitive power. In *ST* 3.21.1 Thomas emphasizes Christ's possession of a human will as justification for the

will. Christ's human will was not efficacious of itself to produce every desired effect, "hence to pray belongs to Christ as man and as having a human will" (*ST* 3.21.1).

Christ prayed in order to instruct humanity. Christ's prayer shows that he is from the Father and provides a model (*exemplum*) for praying (*ST* 3.21.1 *ad* 1; 3.21.3; *Super Mattheum* 26, lectio 5).[25] Thomas draws out this modeling by recalling points established in *ST* 2–2.83. The second objection of *ST* 3.21.1 denies the fittingness of Christ praying on account of Christ's knowledge of future events, since it seems unfitting to petition what one knows will happen. Aquinas replies by attributing to Christ knowledge of future events according to their secondary causes, such as prayer.[26] The third objection quotes John of Damascus that prayer is the "ascent of the mind to God" and then denies the applicability of this to Christ.[27] Ascent is a motion to something above. Christ's mind enjoys the beatific vision and so enjoys the actualized state of ascent (*ST* 3.21.1 *ad* 3). The objections deny the fittingness of Christ's prayer on account of the general characteristics of prayer established in the *Secunda secundae pars*. Thomas replies to the objections by defending that fittingness precisely based upon the general characteristics of prayer.

As does article one, the remaining articles of *ST* 3.21 serve an obvious Christological point while enriching Thomas' presentation of prayer. This dual purpose is evident as well in the *Super Mattheum*, where Thomas notes that Christ provides a model for praying and for how one

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fittingness of Christ praying. This in part relates to the traditional grouping of will and prayer as Christological topics (e.g. in the Lombard's *Sentences* and in the commentaries on the *Sentences*). It also allows Thomas to add nuance to his earlier affirmation that it is lawful to pray for what it is lawful to desire (*ST* 2–2.83.6).

[25] Citations to *Super Mattheum* 26 are from the *Lectura super Mattheum* (Turin, 1951) or are the author's translations thereof.

[26] "Among those things which Christ knew were to come about, were some which he knew would be brought about through his prayer. It was not unreasonable that he should pray for these things" (*ST* 3.21.1 *ad* 2). Not only was it not unreasonable for Christ to pray, but Christ's knowledge of what would occur through the secondary causality of prayer provides additional reasons for the fittingness of Christ's prayer.

[27] Thomas notes this question also in his *Super Mattheum*, but there he answers the question differently. In the *Super Mattheum*, Thomas argues that Christ prayed not for himself but to provide an example, so that we might have recourse to prayer in times of tribulation, and to show that he was from another (*Super Mattheum* 26, lectio 5). Thomas discusses prayer as the 'ascent of the mind to God' in *ST* 2–2.83.1 *ad* 2. While Thomas takes this expression from John Damascene's *De fide orthodoxa*, the expression itself goes back to Evagrius Ponticus and his 35th chapter on prayer (Evagrius Ponticus, *The Praktikos and Chapters on Prayer*, trans. J. E. Bamberger (Kalamazoo, MI, 1981).

ought to pray.[28] Prayer should be humble, devout, and solitary.[29] More specifically, Christ's prayer clarifies the permissible desires of sensuality and the manner in which one may pray for them. Aquinas addresses the standard scholastic question whether Christ prayed according to sensuality. In the strict sense, the answer is no, because sensuality of itself is capable of prayer neither by ascending to God nor by ordering desires. Christ's prayer at Gethsemane did, however, present the desires of sensuality before God. Thomas describes three reasons for this: to show the truth of Christ's human nature, to show that it is licit to desire with "natural desire what God does not wish," and "to show that man should subject his own will to the Divine will" (*ST* 3.21.2).

This second reason might seem particularly difficult to reconcile with Thomas' general presentation of prayer, which follows the Damascene in characterizing prayer as a petition "for becoming things from God" (*ST* 2–2.83.1, citing *De fide orthodoxa* 3.24).[30] It appears that in Christ both his sensuality and simple will (will as nature) sought something unbecoming, namely that he not suffer and die.[31] The resolution of this difficulty relates to the third reason provided by Thomas. The subjection of the human will to the divine will reflects the proper order of wills.[32] Christ's prayer at Gethsemane reflects this proper order. Thomas teases this point out by examining the form of the prayer: "If it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but

[28] Aquinas writes: "Dat ergo exemplum orandi, et quomodo sit orandum" (*Super Mattheum* 26, lectio 5). Thomas uses this same twofold division to exegete Matthew 6:5–8 (on the right way to pray) and 9–15 (on what we ought to ask for in prayer).

[29] The third condition from this list does not remain constant. Thomas sometimes includes solicitude instead of solitude, justifying both through Matthew 6:6. Commenting on Matthew 6:6, Aquinas notes that this refers only to private prayer and does not intend to forbid or restrict public prayer.

[30] For Burgundio's Latin translation of the *De fide orthodoxa*, see *De Fide Orthodoxa: Versions of Burgundio and Cerbanus*, ed. E. M. Buytaert (New York, 1955).

[31] Thomas, following the general lines of thought established in the *Summa Halensis* 3.4.1.2, divided the human will into the will as nature and the will as reason (*Summa theologica seu sic ab origine dicta "Summa fratri Alexandri,"* (Quaracchi, 1948)). The will as nature can will something only as an end; the will as reason can will something as a means ordered to an end. Christ's will as nature willed not to die, for death of itself is an evil. Christ's will as reason, however, willed to die as a means ordered to the end of human salvation. For Thomas' discussion of Christ's human will, see *ST* 3.18.

[32] When applied to the human will broadly understood, this proper order requires subjection of the will of sensuality and the simple will (will as nature) to the deliberative will (will as reason). Thomas investigates the details of this order in *ST* 3.18 and 3.21; the *Super Mattheum* concentrates only on the subjection of the human will to the divine will.

what you [will]" (Matthew 26:39). The petition is made conditionally rather than absolutely ("if it is possible"), and then the condition is specified ("not what I will, but what you"). The specification clarifies that Christ knew everything to be possible for God and sought what fits with divine justice.[33] Thomas characterizes the specification as follows: "Whence he willed to say: I will that what I will may be fulfilled if it is not repugnant to your justice, but rather I will that your justice be fulfilled. And in this [Christ] taught a model (*exemplum*) of how we ought to order our affections, because we ought to so order them that they are not discordant with the divine rule (*regula*)" (*Super Mattheum* 26, lectio 5). The model requires submitting one's own will to the divine will, and teaches how to do so, in action and in prayer.[34]

The *Summa*'s discussion of Christ's prayer began by recalling that prayer is the unfolding of the will to God (*ST* 3.21.1). This principle also serves as the basis for Thomas' response in *ST* 3.21.4, on whether Christ's prayer was always heard. The fulfillment of Christ's prayer depends upon which will the prayer manifests. Christ's deliberative will (will as reason) conformed perfectly to the divine will in all things; every prayer manifesting Christ's deliberative will was heard. Christ's will of sensuality and simple will could licitly will something not willed by God, namely for the cup of the passion to pass. How can this be so? And, how could Christ licitly petition for the cup to pass? Christ's will of sensuality and simple will desired to avoid suffering and the separation of soul and body, both of which are evils considered in and of themselves. Christ licitly petitioned for the cup to pass because this petition was conditioned by a proper order of wills in submission to the divine will.[35]

Thomas presents Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane as providing a further model for praying. The Lord's Prayer specifies licit

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[33] Thomas makes the point in the *Super Mattheum* 26, lectio 5 that Christ did not doubt that everything is possible to God, as is clear from Mark 14:36.

[34] Garrigou-Lagrange takes Christ's prayer at Gethsemane to reflect abandonment in God and reliance on the efficacy of prayer within the plan of divine providence. "The doctrine of the intrinsic efficacy of grace leads also directly to the prayer of contemplation, which considers chiefly the profound action of God in us to mortify and to vivify, and which is expressed by the *fiat* of perfect abandonment" (Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christian Perfection and Contemplation*, p. 100).

[35] "Wenn Christus darin auch für sich nicht erhört wurde, so unterstreicht Thomas, daß sein Gebet doch ohne Sünde war und als vorbildhaft für unser Beten gelten darf: Auch dem Menschen ist es erlaubt, gemäß seinem natürlichen Affekt etwas zu wollen und zu erbitten, was Gott nicht will" (Maidl, *Desiderii interpres*, p. 304).

petitions and an efficacious manner of petitioning. Thomas' analysis of the Lord's Prayer uncovers principles for licit petitions, grounding them in licit desires. Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane provides a model of these principles in action. The prayer at Gethsemane asks for something particular and temporal, something that may be licitly desired. Christ knew this petition would not be fulfilled and did not will it to be fulfilled. The prayer at Gethsemane reflects this in conditioning its request on the fulfillment of the divine will. Those for whom Christ provided a model for praying lack Christ's perfect knowledge. Christ's prayer provides a model nevertheless because it instructs in the correct order of the human will and its submission to the divine will. The Lord's Prayer addresses the problem of human ignorance by stipulating petitions favorable to God. The prayer at Gethsemane provides a conditional form that may be used despite human ignorance. That is, both prayers offer a means to pray effectively and piously despite the problem of human ignorance and the possibility of willing something with a lower will that God does not will. These two prayers teach correct prayer.

Conclusion

Thomas' presentation of prayer can seem overly technical and divorced from the reality of Christian prayer. Failing to peer beneath the careful distinctions and scholastic terminology would yield an impoverished view of prayer in Aquinas. Effective prayer does not require an academic understanding or justification. At the same time, a deeper appreciation of prayer's causal role in the journey toward beatitude only serves to enrich the practice of prayer. Thomas' discussions of Christ's prayer draw out the riches of prayer, combining theological precision with familiar examples. When one more fully understands the model of Christ's prayer one is able to follow that model more fully.

The differences in tone and style between the *Super Mattheum* and the *Summa theologiae* are clear. The persistence of themes from one work to another thus stands out all the clearer. Aquinas' framing of prayer in terms of providence is one such persistent theme. Rather than minimizing the value of prayer, a correct understanding of God's providential ordering of all creation only enhances its value. God's providence orders all things to their proper end and, in the case of rational creatures, grants them the dignity of contingent secondary causality to pursue

freely their own providential end. Prayer serves as one such means to meriting the reward of beatitude. In pursuit of this goal, prayer indicates a willful subjection to God. This subjection recognizes that our every good comes from God and that God is our ultimate end. These more abstract considerations, when combined with the limited and fallible human intellect, yield a very practical problem. For what may we pray? Christ's prayer provides a model.

The Lord's Prayer and the prayer in the garden of Gethsemane teach prayer. As Thomas describes it, the Lord's Prayer is brief, complete, and effective. All goods that may be licitly desired are covered in the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. One can, with perfect confidence, know that in praying the Lord's Prayer nothing is wrongly petitioned and that everything petitioned is rightly desirable. This overcomes the obstacle of human ignorance, promoting faith and hope. The Lord's Prayer serves even to define Christian hope. Christ's prayer at Gethsemane similarly provides a model to pray rightly despite the limitations of the human intellect and will. As prayer manifests the will to God, prayers can be offered for all that may be licitly willed. Christ's prayer at Gethsemane shows clearly in what measure the will of sensuality and will of nature may will something contrary to what God wills. It shows all the more clearly the proper ordering of wills beneath the divine will. The conditional form of the prayer at Gethsemane offers a means to petition licitly while also submitting one's mind and will to God. In short, Christ' prayer answers all the doubts one may have about meritorious and effective prayer. For Thomas, Christ taught not simply the proper words with which to pray; Christ taught the confident hope in which prayers should be offered to God.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ASHKENAZIC *PIYYUT*: HEBREW POETIC PRAYER IN A LATIN ENVIRONMENT (THE TENTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURIES)

Johannes Heil

Piyyut: The Historical Context and Tone of Hebrew Ashkenazic Poetry

A legend states that the tomb of Rav Shimon ben Isaac ben Abun, who was born in Mainz and later died there around 1015, had a well-spring of healing waters flowing from it from which the whole Jewish contemporary society drank in hope. Historical sources call him the *schaliach zibbur*, that is the liturgist of the leading community among the Jewish settlements along the Rhine River during the High Middle Ages; even in late medieval Nuremberg the *Memory Book* commemorates him as *Rabbenu Shimon ha-gadol* (Our great teacher).[1] The title is remarkable, since among the early generations of sages in Ashkenas (the land from the Rhine to the Danube River), he is the only one who is known solely for his poetical work. No *halahkic* decisions[2] on religious and/or social matters were attributed to him by later generations. By way of contrast, others, like Meshullam ben Kalonymos or Gershom ben Jehuda, were experts in both fields, *halakha* and poetry, which generally went hand in hand.[3]

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[1] *Das Martyriologium des Nürnberger Memorbuchs*, ed. Sigmund Salfeld (Berlin, 1898), pp. 86, 298.

[2] *Halahkic* decisions are adaptive judgments on religious and social matters on the basis of the "Torah from Sinai", the "Written Torah" (the Pentateuch together with the Prophets and other Books of the Bible) and the "Oral Torah" (Mishnah and Talmud).

[3] See Abraham M. Habermann, "The Beginning of Hebrew Poetry in Italy and Northern Europe: Northern Europe and France," *The Dark Ages*, ed. Cecil Roth, *The World History of the Jewish People, Medieval Period*, vol. 2 (Tel Aviv, 1966), pp. 267–73; Avraham Grossman, *Hakhme Ashkenaz ha-rishonim* (The Early Sages of Ashqenas 900–1096), (Jerusalem, 1988); Israel Ta-Shema, "Ashkenazi Jewry in the Eleventh Century: Life and Literature," *Ashkenaz. The German-Jewish Heritage*, ed. Gertrude Hirschler (New York, 1988), pp. 23–56; Ivan G. Marcus, "A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis. The Culture

This article offers an analysis of poetic prayer from "Ashkenas"—that is, what the Jews called the lands east and west of the Rhine River, which later also included northern France and England in the west and Bohemia and Poland in the east. Ashkenas draws on the biblical name for the land of the descendants of Noah's son, Japhet (Genesis 10:3, 1 Chronicles 1:6), who was believed to have moved to the north (Jeremiah 51:27). The examples discussed below will show that Ashkenasic spirituality derives from a specific distinct Jewish Rhineland culture, which emerged in a Latin-Christian environment (in contrast to Spanish/Sephardic culture). Many of the hymns and prayers from these lands—in Latin as well as in Hebrew—which are in part recited down to the present day from this tradition, were written at about the same time: the Latin ones from the eighth century onwards, the Hebrew ones from the tenth or eleventh centuries on. Since this article aims to explore the spirit of these prayers, it will focus on the period in which this poetry arose among Jews, from the mid-tenth century until the pogroms during the first crusade (1096), a time when the Jews were still largely unaccustomed to experiences of later persecutions. It will discuss texts which amount to the earliest documents of Jewish life in Latin Europe and the formation of communities in the Rhineland and along the Danube River.[4] This paper in part will try to distinguish how the tone of this early poetry was distinct from poems written after 1096. And this paper will also try to examine the unique voice of the poetic prayer among individuals and in the spirit of the entire Ashkenazic community; this will lead to an examination of the social importance of poetry in this particular context. Finally this article will show how these Jewish texts interacted with other poetic motifs and forms within their Latin environment. At the outset it is important to note that the Jewish poetic liturgical tradition did not so much imitate the Latin writings, but—as I will show below—rather there is antagonistic dialogue and an ongoing tension between these corpora of texts. With regard to the Jewish prayers the purpose of their composition was for the worship

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of Early Ashkenaz," *Cultures of the Jews. A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York, 2002), pp. 449–516.

[4] It is the opinion of this author that there was no continuity from the Roman to the medieval Jewish communities in the cities on the Rhine, and the immigration from Italy started as late as in the early tenth century, says Michael Toch ("The Formation of a Diaspora. The Settlement of Jews in the Medieval German 'Reich'" *Aschkenas* 7.1, 1997, pp. 55–78). For others hold differing views, for example see Norman Golb, *The Jews in Medieval Normandy. A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 137–169.

and instruction of members of the Jewish community. The examples discussed here all derive from Mainz, which is the most important community during the first decades of Ashkenas.

Piyyut[5] is a typical poetic cultural writing form in Ashkenas; in later centuries *piyyutim* were written wherever Jewish communities emerged, in England (until the expulsion of 1290) and in Eastern Europe as well. The meaning of these prayers becomes clear when we consider the importance of the Jewish liturgy which consists almost exclusively of the reading of portions from the Torah and from other biblical scriptures. The *piyyut* were intoned recitation prayers by the *chazan*[6] and the assembly. Ashkenazic poetry was mainly liturgical poetry; therefore *piyyut* and prayer can basically be considered to be congruent with or identical to each other.[7] *Piyyut* was by no means only a by-product of its context, but rather it was a hallmark of the nascent Ashkenasic culture. The deep respect for Shimon ben Isaac gives proof of this. Therefore, any comprehensive depiction of this particular Jewish culture must include an analysis of its poetry, just as a description of medieval religious culture in general would be incomplete without considering the poetic-liturgical heritage of the time. It is indeed fascinating to see an immigrant society so dedicated to the lively production of pious poetry. The young Jewish communities in the lands north of the Alps did not confine themselves to creating a distinct social space in a non-Jewish environment and to adapting the heritage of liturgical poetry from the Holy Land, Byzantium, and Italy, but as soon as they arrived at the banks of the Rhine River, they obviously felt the need to speak with their own unique voice and to create a liturgical order different from

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[5] *Piyyut* (poem, pl.: *piyyutim*) and *payyetan* (poet) are adaptations from the original Greek term *poietes* (poet), used already in early midrashim, such as *Midrash Song of Songs*; see Ismar Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (1931, repr. Hildesheim, 1962 and 1995), pp. 5, 249; Ezra Fleischer, *Piyyut*, in: *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 13, col. 573ff.; *Tora, wer wird dich nun erheben? Pijutim mi Magenza—religiöse Dichtungen der Juden aus dem mittelalterlichen Mainz*, ed./comm. Simon Hirschhorn (Gerlingen and Darmstadt, 1995), pp. 15–18.

[6] A *chazan* is a cantor who leads the prayer services.

[7] Sephardic poetry followed, with regard to style and content, completely different (that is Arabic) patterns, and it was a poetry merely dedicated to aesthetic perfection and secular topics. For more background on this see Yosef Tobi, *Proximity and Distance. Medieval Hebrew and Arabic Poetry* (*Études sur le judaïsme médiéval*) 27, (Leiden and London, 2004). See also Jakob J. Petuchovski, *Theology and Poetry. Studies in Medieval Piyyut* (Cincinnati, 1978); Ross Brann, "'The Fire of Love Poetry has Kissed Me, How Can I Resist?' Hebrew Lyric in Perspective," *Medieval Lyric. Genres in Historical Context*, ed. William D. Paden (Urbana and Chicago, 2000), pp. 317–333.

the one in the lands south of the Alps and in Spain. Based on biblical forms (especially *Tefilim*/Psalms and *Shir ha-shirim*/Song of Songs) the medieval poets used these sacred texts as models to create new distinct, if familiar, prayers.

In terms of form and purpose, Ashkenasic poetry was functional poetry—functional especially in the sense that it was composed in order to enrich and to complete the established corpus of prayers recited during the worship services, especially during the Holidays, which were outside the of land of Israel celebrated on two days with consequent services.[8]

At this point it is helpful to mention some of the types of prayers which will be discussed in this study: *Qeroabah* is a composition interpolated in the Eighteen-Benedictions-prayer (*Shmoneh 'Esreh*); *Yozer* is a single or a sequence of *piyyutim* interwoven between the blessings of *Shema*' ("Hear, o Israel"); *Selicha* is a prayer of and for forgiveness said during the days before and during Rosh ha-Shana and Yom Kippur, but also as an additional collective prayer to the services of the high holidays.[9] The individual voice is concealed behind the purpose and the public character of all such compositions. It is also worth mentioning that religious poetry was—when incorporated into the liturgical order—an authoritative text, and it became subject to commentary, in ways similar to the written and the oral Torah. This poetic tradition was eagerly commented upon and as a result it even eventually took on its own air of authority.[10] There was a kind of "progressive renaissance" that occurred with regard to the character of the poetry among

[8] After the destruction of the temple the Jewish service underwent a process of transformation, and the order of standard prayers developed into its final form only in the sixth century (Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud*, Berlin, 1977), that is simultaneously with the beginning of *piyyut*-composition in the Holy Land. The emergence and success of *piyyut* was according to R. Yehuda ben Barsilai due to the ban of studying and preaching rabbinical texts ("deuterosis," Justinian, *Novella* 146, a. 553), since it opened another way of instruction; see Elbogen, "Der jüdische Gottesdienst," p. 282. Werner ("Sacred Bridge," p. 235) understands the reference to the imperial legislation as a pretext rather than a cause for the introduction of *piyyutim*, i.e. new content and forms of the liturgical order; see also Wout Jac. van Bekkum, "Zur Verwendung der Bibel im klassischen Pijjut," *Die Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition. Festschrift für Johann Maier zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Helmut Merklein (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), pp. 228f.

[9] See Fleischer "Hebrew Liturgical Poetry," pp. 140f., 212f. Hirschhorn, "Tora," pp. 41–49.

[10] See Elisabeth Hollender, "Eine permanente Renaissance? Zum Status (*quaestionis*) von Pijjut-Kommentar," *An der Schwelle zur Moderne. Juden in der Renaissance* (*Studies in European Judaism*) 7 (2003), pp. 25–50.

the authors who composed *piyyut* in that it continued to be relevant beyond its own day and age.

In modern scholarship, however, Shimon and other poets from Ashkenas receive far less attention than they had during the Middle Ages. If one were to consult one of the few anthologies of classical and medieval Jewish poetry, almost all the examples given there are from Eleazar berabbi Kallir, Yannai, Judah ha Levi, Shlomo ibn Gbirol, Moses and Abraham ben Ezra and other authors from the Holy Land, Babylonia and from the Sephardic world.[11] Research on medieval Jewish liturgical poetry has tended to focus on the very beginning to the core issues of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*;[12] Ashkenasic poetry has, however, been overlooked by many who do literary history and Jewish social and intellectual history as well.[13] The interest of many modern scholars in liturgical poetry from the lands of Ashkenas is limited to those who seek examples for the artistic expression of persecution experiences (that is in documents from the time after the crusader pogroms of 1096).[14] This

[11] Abraham E. Millgram, *An Anthology of Medieval Hebrew Literature* (London and New York, 1962); *Masterpieces of Hebrew Literature. A Treasury of 2000 Years of Jewish Creativity*, ed./intr. Curt Levinat (New York, 1969); *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* ed. T. Carmi (New York, 1981); *The Gazelle. Medieval Hebrew Poems on God, Israel, and the Soul*, ed./trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia, 1991); *Wine, Woman, and Death. Medieval Hebrew Poems on the Good Life*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1996); Wout Jac. van Bekkum, "Bibel im klassischen Pijjut," pp. 226–42; *Ninety-two Poems and Hymns of Yehuda Halevi*/[orig. ed. by] Franz Rosenzweig, trans. by Thomas Kovach et al., ed. and intr. by Richard A. Cohen (Albany, 2000); *The Defiant Muse: Hebrew Feminist Poems from Antiquity to the Present. A Bilingual Anthology*, ed. (London, 2000); the most comprehensive compilation is *Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry*, 4 vols., ed. Israel Davidson (New York, 1970). A recent example for the ongoing interest in Sephardic medieval poetry is *Poeci Zlotej Ery: Jehuda Halevi, Solomon ibn Gabriol, Moses ibn Ezra, wybral, przel. i wstępem poprzedzil*, trans. and ed. Aleksander Ziemny (Warsaw, 1996).

[12] See especially Leopold Zunz, *Die synagogale Poesie des Mittelalters*, 2 vols. (1855–59, repr. Hildesheim, 1967); Leopold Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie* (1865, repr. Hildesheim 1966); Elbogen, "Der jüdische Gottesdienst." See also Abraham M. Habermann, *Rabbenu Gershom ben Yehuda Me'or ha-gola. Slihot u-pismonim* (Jerusalem 1943/44), and Abraham M. Habermann, on Shimon ben Isaac (see below n. 33).

[13] Occasionally in surveys on the history of *piyyut* the Ashkenasic is completely ignored: Meir Wallenstein, *Some Unpublished Piyyutim from the Cairo Genizah* (Manchester, 1956), in the General Introduction "The nature and composition of *piyyut*," pp. 1–13.

[14] The best studies in this regard are Elisabeth Hollender, "Zwei hebräische Klagedichtungen aus der Zeit nach dem Zweiten Kreuzzug," *Aschkenas* 6.1 (1996), pp. 11–54; Susan Einbinder, *Beautiful Death. Jewish Poetry and Martyrdom in Medieval France* (Princeton, 2002). For the period after 1096 see also Ephraim von Bonn, *Hymnen und Gebete*, trans. and commentary by Hans Georg von Mutius, *Judaistische Texte und Studien*, 11, (Hildesheim, 1989); Susan Einbinder, "The Troyes Laments. Jewish Martyrology in Hebrew and Old French," *Viator* 30 (1999), pp. 201–30; Idem, "Meir ben Elijah of

approach has generated a somewhat unbalanced picture.[15] However, recent scholarly work, see especially Karin König,[16] Susan Einbinder,[17] Elisabeth Hollender,[18] Jakob J. Petuchovski, and others,[19] provide some surveys on classical and medieval Hebrew poetry and offer a more complete picture of the context of these works.[20]

Norwich. Persecution and Poetry among Medieval English Jews," *Journal of Medieval History* 26.2 (2000), pp. 145–162.

[15] A recent study argues that Abraham Ibn Ezra, the Spanish scholar who traveled in the mid-twelfth century from Spain northward and came as far as England, had wandered "from one unenlightened Jewish community to another throughout Christian lands." This tells more about the horizon of the modern author than about Ibn Ezra and his contemporaries: Joseph Yahalom, "Aesthetic Models in Conflict: Classicist versus Ornamental Jewish Poetics," *From al-Andalus to the Haskalah*, ed. Ross Brann and Adam Sutcliffe (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 22. In the same volume another author makes clear that the preference for the Sephardi tradition among eighteenth-century northern European *maskilim* was deeply routed in the weird perception of their own intellectual and spiritual heritage: Adam Shear, "Judah Halevi's *Kuzari* in the *Haskalah.* The Reinterpretation and Reimagining of a Medieval Work," pp. 71–73; see also Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," repr. in *From Text to Context. The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, N.H., 1994), pp. 71–92; see also Einbinder, "Beautiful Death," pp. 7f.

[16] Karin König, "'Wo sind deine Wunder?'—Eine Selicha von Rabbenu Gershom bar Jehuda-Meor ha Gola als Beispiel synagogaler Poesie im Mittelalter," *Liturgie und Dichtung. Ein interdisziplinäres Kompendium*, ed. Hansjakob Becker et al. (Pietas liturgica; vols. 1–2), (St. Ottilien, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 107–40.

[17] See above n. 14.

[18] See works by Elisabeth Hollender mentioned below and Idam, "Zur Verwendung der Bibel im frühen ashkenasischen Pijjut," *Die Bibel in jüdischer und christlicher Tradition*, pp. 441–54.

[19] See Petuchovski, "Theology and Poetry"; Stefan C. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer. New Perspectives on Jewish Liturgical History* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 153–206 (on the medieval period, however with a focus on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries).

[20] See Aaron Mirsky, *Reshit ha-piyyut* (The Origins of *Piyyut*), (Jerusalem, 1965); Abraham M. Habermann, *Toldot ha-piyut veha-shirah* (A history of Hebrew Liturgical and Secular Poetry), vol. 2 (Ramat Gan, 1972), pp. 172–80; Ezra Fleischer, *Shirat-ha-kodesh ha-Ivrit bi-Yeme-ha-benayim* (Hebrew Religious Poetry of the Middle Ages), (Jerusalem, 1975); Ezra Fleischer, *Tefilah u-minhage tefilah Erets-Yiśreelim bi-tequfat ha-Genizah* (Erets-Israel Prayer and Prayer-Rituals as Portrayed in the Geniza Documents), (Jerusalem, 1988); Dan Pagis, *Hebrew Poetry of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. With a Foreword by Robert Alter* (Taubman Lectures in *Jewish Studies*) (Berkeley, 1991); Avraham Grossman, "Exegesis of the *Piyyut* in 11th Century France," *Rashi et la culture juive en France du Nord au moyen âge*, ed. Gilbert Dahan et al. (Paris and Louvain, 1997), pp. 261–77; Leon J. Weinberger, *Jewish Hymnography. A Literary History*, (London, 1998); Adena Tanenbaum, *The Contemplative Soul. Hebrew Poetry and Philosophical Theory in Medieval Spain* (Études sur le Judaïsme médiéval; 25) (Leiden etc., 2002). A helpful survey on the state of research on *piyyut* and essential recent editions of 'classical' *piyyutim* is a review article by Elisabeth Hollender, "The Fathers of *Piyyut*," *Prooftexts* 21.2 (2001), pp. 229–236 (on Shalom Spiegel, *Avot ha-piyyut*, ed. Menahem Schmelzer, New York and Jerusalem, 1996).

To return to the tale of the well at Shimon's tomb mentioned above, we can easily see that this story can best be understood in light of his poetry; Shimon's compositions themselves were considered to be the well, and this well overflows with curative poetic religious verse as long as his compositions are recited during worship services (and perhaps elsewhere, in private prayer and meditation) for the healing of the souls of the Jewish community. But the legend about the tomb, and the sadness surrounding death, makes us also aware of a methodological problem: as we will see later, an attitude of lament seems to dominate these texts. Many of these prayers sound like pleas to be rescued from life's troubles and/or for salvation, and this is why—for the modern reader—the poetical heritage of early Ashkenasim reflects life as a veil of tears. Such readings are disturbing. They contradict our knowledge about Jewish medieval history: the pogroms of 1096 were a turning point toward an increasingly terrible period in Jewish history whereas the decades leading up to the pogroms Jews had been living in a comparatively comfortable state. Some might interpret the sad tone to mean that the Ashkenasic Jews already faced in the eleventh century widespread threats and persecutions.[21] Recently historians, however, have even read these texts as proof of a "deep enmity" of Jews toward their Christian environment which prevailed among Ashkenasim already before 1096.[22] I hesitate to subscribe to either one or the other position because such a conclusion would appear to be drawn from a surface reading of the texts that are available to us today. Undoubtedly, these compositions are valuable sources which provide insight into the *Lebenswelt* of Jews in the tenth and eleventh century. Yet what they provide is not a comprehensive record or a clear narrative, but a complex textual message,

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[21] A good discussion about this is in Richard Landes, "The Massacres of 1010: On the Origins of Popular Anti-Jewish Violence in Western Europe," *From Witness to Witchcraft. Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought* (Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien, hg. von der Herzog August-Bibliothek; vol. 11) ed. Jeremy Cohen (Wiesbaden, 1996), pp. 79–111. See also Kenneth R. Stow, *The '1007 Anonymous' and Papal Sovereignty: Jewish Perceptions of the Papacy and Papal Policy in the High Middle Ages*, Hebrew Union College Annual Supplements, vol. 4, (Cincinnati, 1984).

[22] Israel J. Yuval, "Christliche Symbolik und jüdische Martyriologie zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge," and Avraham Grossman, "The Cultural and Social Background of Jewish Martyrdom in Germany in 1096," both in *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, ed. Alfred Haverkamp (*Vorträge und Forschungen*) 47 (1999); Hebrew versions appeared in *Facing the Cross. The Persecutions of 1096 in History and* Historiography, ed. Yom Tov Assis et al. (Jerusalem, 2000); see Johannes Heil, " 'Deep Enmity' and/or 'Close Ties'? Jews and Christians before 1096. Sources, Hermeneutics, and Writing History in 1096," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 9 (2002), pp. 259–306.

generated for specific social, religious, and liturgical purposes, which requires careful examination, when read as sources concerning Jewish history. What is especially necessary to remember is that a thorough consideration of the cultural and mental setting of such texts is very important to consider.

Furthermore, modern readers need to be aware of the conditions of the transmission of the poetry. The strong lament tone of pre-1096 religious poetry, which survives to our day, may be the result of the simple fact that later generations transmitted only those texts that corresponded to their own experiences, which resonated with lament themes. Other texts, which were awkward or became meaningless, may have been dropped from the chain of transmission and lost. It may be that the surviving sample of texts from the tenth and eleventh centuries, from the times before the pogroms of 1096, are one-sided and reflect rather the deteriorated mental state of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when Jews were both expelled from England and the royal dominions of France, and also subjected to repeated persecutions in Germany (particularly in the years 1287, 1298, 1337, 1348/49). In contrast to Medieval Latin culture, Ashkenazic text history has no "forgotten manuscript" traditions which we know of that have survived for centuries on a remote shelf of a library in order to reveal forgotten treasures of the past. There is also no medieval "Cairo Genizah" from the lands of the Rhine River; at best there are fragments of Hebrew texts preserved as filling material in book covers and elsewhere. Most of what had once been in existence has been destroyed, and each surviving Hebrew text from the Middle Ages has actively been handed down from generation to generation. The oldest extant Ashkenazic *Makhzorim* such as the "Makhzor Worms" date from the later thirteenth century[23] and may reveal a selective historical tradition.[24] To be sure, this author also does not believe that there ever was some kind of "Golden Age"

[23] "Makhzor" = "Repetition," "cycle": originally meaning calendar and holiday tables, then a book containing prayers in the order of the service. The French "Makhzor Vitry" from the early 12th c. is rather a halakhic compilation with annotations related to the service than a prayer book in the later sense; see Ernst Roth, "Der Wormser Machsor," in: *Udim* 11/12 (1981), pp. 219–244; Gérard Nahon, "Isaac b. Dorbelo et le 'Mahzor Vitry,'" *Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub at-Turtushi: Christianity, Islam and Judaism Meet in East-Central Europe (800–1300)*, ed. Petr Chárvat et al. (Praha, 1996), pp. 191–206; Reif, "Judaism and Hebrew Prayer," p. 169.

[24] A similar problem has recently been discussed by Adele Berlin, "Qumran Laments and the Study of Lament Literature," *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the 5th International Symposium of the Orion Center for the*

for European Jewry before the crusades, and I remain skeptical about the adequacy of a term such as "symbiosis," as the title of an otherwise brilliant recent survey on the early history of Ashkenas.[25]

Some of the prayer compositions under examination here are until today part of the services for the high holidays. One must, however, be careful with some of the attributions given in modern prayer books. For example, even some modern *Makhzorim* follow a thirteenth-century legend and attribute the "*U-netane toqef* " to the legendary Rabbi Amnon of Mainz yet stylistic observations and Genizah fragments from Cairo have made clear that this prayer for *Rosh ha-Shanah* and *Yom Kippur* must be much older.[26] Other high medieval works, though mostly of undisputed authorship, especially the many long and complex acrostic compositions, are not incorporated into modern prayer books.

Piyyut: Examples of Ashkenazic Poetry and Their Meaning

A few examples of Ashkenazic poetry should suffice to demonstrate its uniqueness and meaning for the medieval Jewish societies it was used in. The first example to be examined here is a composition by Meshullam ben Kalonymos, whom some modern prayer books incorrectly locate in Rome. Pre-modern sources call him "ha Romai,"[27] indicating thereby that his family was of Italian origin, but also that he worked outside

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Studies of the Dead sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, ed. Esther G. Chazon (*Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah*) 48 (Leiden and Boston, 2003), pp. 16f.

[25] Ivan Marcus, "A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis: The Culture of Early Ashkenaz," *Cultures of the Jews. A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York, 2002), pp. 449–516. A hint for "the good old days"—in this case the time before the Paris disputation of 1240 and the burning of the Talmud—however, sounds in the term "Jewish French symbiosis" for various reasons inadequate even in a French thirteenth-century *piyyut*. See Raphael Loewe, "A 13th-century *piyyut* set to French verse," *Revue des Études Juives* 161 (2002), pp. 83–96; see also Einbinder, "Beautiful Death," pp. 4f.

[26] Menahem Hayyim Schmelzer, "Penitence, prayer and (charity?)," *Minhah le-Nahum; Biblical and Other Studies Presented to Nahum M. Sarna*, ed. Marc Brettler and Michael Fishbane (Sheffield, 1993), pp. 291–99. On the legendary Amnon of Mainz see Ivan G. Marcus, "The Kiddush ha-shem Ashkenas and the Story of Amnon of Mainz," *Studien zur jüdischen Geschichte und Soziologie. Festschrift Julius Carlebach*, ed. *Mitarbeiter der Hochschule für Jüdische Studien*, (Heidelberg,1992), pp. 97–113; Elisabeth Hollender, "Narrative Kreativität in Ashkenaz. Die Erzählung(en) über Amnon von Mainz," *Im Gespräch*, 11 (2005), pp. 63–78; the most comprehensive study on Jewish medieval legends of the saints is Lucia Raspe, *Jüdische Hagiographie im mittelalterlichen Aschkenas* (Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism; 19), (Tübingen, 2006).

[27] Joseph Ha'Cohen, vgl. Zunz, "Literaturgeschichte," p. 105.

Rome, in his case in Mainz, where he died some time after 1000. The text reads…

With trepidation in my heart I offer my supplication,
bending the knee as I bear Thy people's message.
O Thou who hast brought me forth from the womb,
enlighten my darkness, that I may speak words of fervor.
Lead me in Thy truth. Teach me to pour forth inspiring meditation,
shelter me under Thy protection and draw me nigh unto Thee.
My cry comes from the Depth of my soul. I seek Thee;
O let Thy charity in judgment be nigh.
Thou who art omniscient and greatly exalted,
Teach me how to pray with understanding,
that I may bring healing for them that send me.
O purify and direct the utterance of my lips,
accept my fervent prayer as an offering,
and let my entreaty break forth as the flowing waters.
Prepare Thou my way that my speech falter not;
O Thou Rock, support my steps lest they fail;
uphold and strengthen me that I grow not weary or faint;
accept my words and suffer me not to fall.
From terror and trembling preserve me;
Regard my contrition and come Thou to my aid.
Oh be gracious unto the bruised in spirit,
as Thou didst assure Thy seer, and have mercy upon Israel.
Remember us onto life, O King, who delightest in life,
and inscribe us in the Book of Life
so that we may live worthily for Thy sake, O God of life.
O King, Thou Helper, Redeemer and Shield,
praised be Thou, O Lord, Shield of Abraham.
Thou, O Lord, art mighty forever.
Thou callest the dead to immortal life for Thou art mighty in salvation.
Thou sustainest the living with loving-kindness,
and in great mercy grantest everlasting life to those who have passed away.
Thou upholdest the falling, healest the sick, settest free those in bondage,
and keepest faith with those that sleep in the dust.
Who is like unto Thee, Almighty King,
who decreest death and grantest immortal life and bringest forth salvation?

"*Eimecha*…" is said during the morning service for Yom Kippur, which provides the background for some of themes and words such as "judgment" or "inscribe us in the Book of Life" (lines 8, 24). This poem reveals the primarily focus of this entire volume in that it provides a reflection on the meaning of prayer itself; that is, prayer establishes a bridge between humankind and the Almighty. The author together with

the reader and the assembly of the faithful offer their supplications. They ask for divine assistance to articulate "inspiring meditation" (5), which means "prayer with understanding" (10). The well done, inspired prayer helps orient the community so that their steps will not fail (15). The prayer will also pave the way for the Almighty to come to the aid of those who pray (20, 32f.) and will remind the Almighty of the souls of the faithful so that their names may be written "in the Book of life" (24) so that they will achieve "everlasting life" (31).[28] Indeed, if the reader of this text did not know its origins, it would be nearly impossible to know whether this was written by a Jewish or a Christian writer of the tenth or even of the twentieth century. This is, however, not to say that Meshullam's composition was directly inspired by Christian examples, for it was Jewish spirituality which provided the source for each of his words. But the example indicates that the function, words, tone, and sentiments of prayers can be (almost) the same when Jews or Christians turned their voices to God in a particular way or time. However, before going into more detail on the content of this poem allow me to turn to another.

Similar observations can be made in another of Meshullam's compositions, "*Moré ha-taïm*," which again is recited today during the morning service of *Yom Kippur*.[29] It is a fine example for what I call the "progressive Renaissance" of Biblical writing. Here Meshullam wrote a kind of versed "super-commentary" for the verses of Psalm 145 which are quoted selectively at the end of each stanza.

Thou you showest sinners the path in which they walk, teach me the way to tread.
(145.1) *I will extol Thee, my God, O King.*
I will yoke dawn to night in continuous proclamation of Thy sovereignty:
O Thou that abidest to eternity, Thou art the peerless One.
(2) *Every day will I worship Thee.*
My heart yearns to worship Thee; I will stand, watch to extol Thy holiness.

[28] English translations from the "Silverman Mahzor": *Worship Services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with Explanatory Notes, Meditations and Supplementary Prayers and readings*, comp./arr. R. Morris Silverman, (Hartford, 1951). A similar reflection on the meaning of the liturgy of the day can be found in *U-netane toqef* (see above, n. 26) which holds a prominent place in the *musaf* (additional service) in the high holiday liturgy.

[29] Hebrew text by Daniel Goldschmidt, *Mahzor le-yamim ha-noraim* (Prayer Book for Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur), pp. 122–24; with German trans. Hirschhorn, "Tora," pp. 130–35, 151.

(3) *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.*
Fulfill the desire of them who hope for Thy mercy, that Thy faithful servants may rejoice.
(4) *One generation shall laud Thy works to another.*
With supplication and fasting they draw near to Thee; they were fashioned for Thine honor, to serve Thee.
(5) *The glorious splendor of Thy majesty, they shall proclaim.*
With reverence they tell of the splendor of Thy kingdom, pledging unswerving loyalty to Thy unity.
(6) *They shall speak of the might of Thy awe-inspiring acts.*
This day a fourfold service they hold before Thee, and each day a sevenfold meditation of Thy praise.
(7) *They shall utter the fame of Thy great goodness.*
At morning I offer my supplication before Thee, and at eventide Thou wilt blot out my transgressions.
(8) *The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.*
God is our rock, yea, our delight. He will subdue our perversity that all may proclaim:
(9) *The Lord is good to all.*
Raise up the city of Thy joy; uplift her hallowed stones, precious as the jewels of a crown.
(10) *All Thy works shall give thanks unto Thee, O Lord.*
The Levites and pious servants will sing in harmony; priests in priestly robes will serve Thee in righteousness.
(11) *They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom.*
In the courts shall they flourish and thrive within the walls, bringing forth fruits in their old age.
(12) *To make known to the sons of the men His mighty acts.*
The pure and faithful will sing of Thy glory when Thou hast set Thy throne within the everlasting house.
(13) *Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.*
When Thou gatherest the ransomed people to Thy dwelling place, they shall invest Thee with might, like those of old that passed through the waves.
(14) *The Lord upholdeth all that fall.*
Thy people have gathered themselves in solemn assembly to declare Thy goddess and offer their prayer.
(15) *The eyes of all wait upon Thee.*
May be their confession as ancient offerings before Thee, and the utterance of Thy witnesses be like sacrifices on Thine altar.
(16) *Thou openest Thy hand.*
In Thy mercy glance from the lattice of heaven, ready to forgive the people that call Thee blessed.
(17) *The Lord is righteous in all His ways.*
O hearken to the pleas of the folk called by Thy name, and be gracious unto those who observe Thy festivals.
(18) *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him.*

Thou art my God who worketh wonders; mayest Thou accept our cry and disregard vile accusers.

(19) *He will fulfill the desire of them that revere Him.*
Grant hope to the man who casts his burden upon Thee. O Thou Holy One, cover up our transgressions with Thy love.

(20) *The Lord preserveth all them that love Him.*
O receive my prayer as if it were offered in the holy city of perfect beauty. Hear my voice and pardon my offense.

(21) *My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord.*

At a first glance, it seems that Meshullam does not add much new to the verses. Yet we need only to read the opening line to find out that the translation needs more nuance: "Thou who showest the sinner the path" corresponds to the Hebrew "*moré ha-taím*," which actually means "(Thou who are the) teacher of the errant."[30] This difference is important, for the focus shifts from sin and reconciliation to an appeal for continuous study. Sin, if we understand it properly, is not something accidental, but rather derivative, flowing out of a lack of insight and knowledge, as well as a lack of effort to gain understanding. The Almighty himself figures here as the teacher, and his revelation will be understandable to those who seek after understanding. This is not the only instance where the prayer becomes an actualization of the Psalm. The verse, "They shall speak of the might…" (145.6), is explained by Meshullam by his commentary: on Yom Kippur there is a fourfold service, and every day the faithful address their prayers seven times to the Almighty. Later on in the famous Psalm 145.15 we read, "The eyes of all wait upon Thee." Meshullam expresses his belief that the prayer of the faithful count as much as the offerings that were once given in the temple.[31] For Meshullam's audience, this was perhaps the most important moment in this medieval rewriting of the Psalm: the community understands that even in times which lack a visible temple and sacrifices (the Hebrew here reads *parim*) the covenant is not revoked. Therefore in Mainz, far to the north, in Meshullam's days, the faithful may also fulfill the Torah—perhaps even more perfectly than their forefathers once had been able to in the Holy Land—even unto the end days (note the eschatological flavor of the poetic comment to verses

[30] The translation cannot reflect the immediacy of the invocation that the Hebrew original has.

[31] Explicitly in a Jozer Shabbat-composition by Shimon ben Isaac ben Abun; see Hirschhorn, pp. 210–23, see page 214.

145.11–14) when the temple and sacrifice will be restored for the sake of God's true people.

There is even one instance where it seems that Meshullam may have thought that the verse of the original Psalm was incomplete and would be misleading for his audience. Commenting on Psalm 145.18 ("The Lord is close to all them that call upon him") he expressed more precisely that only those who are elected ("the folk called by Thy name") may attain the grace they seek. What we grasp here is a silent dispute about election and true faith. It is a moment where the present has an immediate impact on the composition. Meshullam knew that the faithful of his community were not the only ones "calling upon the Lord" and seeking grace and redemption; he knew that the same Psalm-verses would also be recited outside the synagogue and Jewish homes, vis-à-vis the synagogue, daily and even hourly, in the Latin speaking world, in monasteries and churches.[32] His emphasis is clearly upon how his own community is the sole righteous heir of the Psalmist's promises.

This observation leads to another issue. Most probably, Meshullam rewrote and expanded the Psalm because he felt that the text, which reflected the day when Israel was still united, did not fully reflect the situation of his own day—theologically speaking his day was a day of dispersion among the Jewish people. In social terms, Jews were a minority in a Christian society which claimed to be the true owner of the same sacred texts and therefore the addressee of God's promises. The *piyyutim* of the High Middle Ages provide many such subtle hints about how their historical context was one of continuous struggle with the Latin Christian community. The *payyetanim* could not reverse the present state of affairs, but they could compete with its negative influence. They wanted to assure the Jewish community that the present condition of Israel was not hopeless or meaningless and that the liturgy still offered to their audience a theologically based rationalization of the world in which they lived as God's people. Thus their compositions, poems, and prayers aimed to strengthen the hope and resolve

[32] For the origins of Christian psalmody James W. McKinnon, "Book of Psalms, Monasticism, and the Western Liturgy," *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Albany, N.Y., 1999), pp. 43–58; Joseph Dyer, "Psalms in Monastic Prayer," *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, pp. 59–89; Idem, "Monastic Psalmody in the Middle Ages," *Revue Bénédictine* 99 (1989), pp. 41–74; Idem, "The Singing of Psalms in Early Medieval Office," *Speculum* 64 (1989), pp. 535–78.

of a marginalized community, and indeed that their fortunes might be reversed, and ultimately lead to salvation in the end.

We can detect also other similar counter-arguments in these poems. *Arcu ha-Yamim* (Many are the days that consolation does not come), a *Selicha* written by Shimon ben Isaac ben Abun,[33] is a highly elaborative composition with 18 verses, each in "progressive repetition"[34] with four lines and four words according to the order of the alphabet (AABB GGDD KhKhWW…). Here, the author blames what he calls the "poets of lies," who sit "safely in their castles," and threaten evil on God's flock. The Hebrew term *tira* for "castle" appears repeatedly in Shimon's compositions but with different meaning: in other texts the Almighty and his Torah are called *tira* for example. One interpretation is that the castles of evil are the fortified churches and monasteries rather than the castles of knights and princes. It is also important to note that the high visible castles above the Rhine River which tourists see today did not yet exist in Shimon's time. The image that is being presented therefore may well be of the types of fortresses that were available in that day and in particular churches and monasteries: as Meshullam ben Kalonymos had stated in the example given above, Shimon also was well aware of the competition concerning the true meaning of scripture and therefore the true faith. He made this even more explicit in another composition, his *Selicha Miqwe Israel*, writing: "The voluptuous men are sitting in comfort and they harvest your vineyard." To be sure, Shimon limited the meaning not to the few Jewish vines, but to the Lord's vineyard as a whole by saying: "Every day they seek for intrigues in order to destroy your beloved ones. They stand in front of you saying: *We* are [your people], and nobody else."[35] Therefore the fact that the harvest fills the barns of the "voluptuous men" poses necessarily a question about God's loyalty to his people and how Israel could be the light of the Torah: "Why, oh Lord, do you

[33] On Shimon ben Isaac and for the Hebrew text see Abraham M. Habermann, *Piyyute R. Shim'on b. Yizhaq. Liturgical Poems of R .Simon bar Isaak, with an Appendix Liturgical Poems of R. Moses bar Kalonymos* (Berlin, 1938), pp. 169–71; see also Petuchovski, "Theology and Poetry," pp. 56 f.; Elisabeth Hollender, *Synagogale Hymnen—Qedushtaot des Simon ben Isaak im Amsterdamer Machsor, Judentum und Umwelt*, 55, (Frankfurt am Main etc., 1994); Lucia Raspe, "Payyetanim as Heroes of Medieval Folk Narrative. The case of R. Shim'on ben Yishaq of Mainz," *Jewish Studies between the Disciplines. Papers in Honour of Peter Schäfer*, ed. Klaus Herrmann et al. (Leiden, 2003), pp. 354–69.

[34] "Progressive Repetition" is also a characteristic of Latin poetry of the time: see Szövérffy, see below, p. 357 n. 50.

[35] Emphasis and completion mine.

repudiate us, why do you hide your visage?"[36] Describing the deplorable position of a struggling minority, Shimon had chosen a vivid picture which invested the motives of individuals from the present with a tone of biblical lament. Thereby, however, the composition itself and its formal structure provided the answer. There was nothing new about the idea of "castles of evil;" such castles and voluptuous evildoers had always been a part of Jewish historical experience as again and again the Lord had rescued Israel from such evil doers.

It is after all not due to the formal aspects of *piyyut* that Jewish prayers of the time were widely imitated revisions of biblical poetry. Using the Psalms and Song of Songs as models was a veritable re-appropriation of the biblical promises, since the Christians (who are hardly ever mentioned by name in the poems, by the way)[37] prayed and interpreted the same texts with their own form of commentary, i.e. Christological and ecclesiological explanations. *Piyyut* reinterpreted biblical motives and figures for the true owners and heirs of the scripture. When Shimon ben Isaac wrote "…but my redeemer lives," he obviously quoted from Job 19.25, but in the given context the meaning of the verse went far beyond a simple biblical quotation. In this *Yozer* for the Shabbat during the Pessah week (*Ahowecha ehewucha*)[38] he also varied a core motive of Christian theology, and he did this for a composition which would be read in the synagogue some time before the Christian Easter holidays. More precisely, and depending on the calendar, it was possible that this *Yozer* would be read on Shabbat during the Christian Holy Week, less

[36] Hebrew text Habermann, "Piyyute R. Shim'on b. Yizhaq," pp. 171–4; with German trans. Hirschhorn, "Tora," pp. 252–7; the words "why do you hyde your visage" (*lama… tastir paneiha*) paraphrases biblical motives like Job 13:24.

[37] An exception is the reference to "*ha-talui nozer*/the hanged Nazarene" in the version (interpolation?) of Gershom ben Yehuda's Selicha, *A'ei qol nifle'uteicha* as found in König, "Gershom bar Jehuda," pp. 112, 120, 134f.). Hirschhorn ("Tora," pp. 298, 322) provides a different, apparently on the basis of Baer, *Selichot*, no. 13, pp. 60–64, and Habermann, "Rabbenu Gershom ben Yehuda," pp. 7–9. König connects the hint about the crucified Christ (and the admonition against baptizing) to a younger legend which states that Gershom's son Elchanan had been forcibly converted. She therefore tends to read this *piyyut* as proof for that a persecution of Jews in Mainz 1012, as one non-Jewish source only records ("Annales Quedlinburgenses," *MGH Scriptores 3, p. 81*). However, the story of the baptized son eludes an untested interpretation since it seems to be a standard motif of Ashkenasic hagiographic tradition; it appears also in legends about Shimon ben Isaac ben Abun; see Hirschhorn, "Tora," pp. 156f., 286.

[38] Habermann, pp. 27–30; Hirschhorn, pp. 210–23, quote from 210f., commentary 228f.

than twenty four hours before the same Job verse would be said during the Easter Vigil service in the churches—in Latin.

What happened here was a veritable dispute about essential theological issues, but a silent one, since the counterpart was not supposed to hear the argument (even if the Christian side may have suspected the Jews to make such arguments). Nevertheless, the silent argument was loud and clear enough to comfort the faithful: the claim was that the opponent in all his or her strength was the errant one. Shimon ben Isaac's work provides many such examples of poetically embedded counter-arguments that refuted the implicit suggestions that the more numerous and powerful, and arguably more prosperous, Christians were blessed by God in a way that showed God's favor was more directed towards them as opposed to the Jews.

One phrase, which reflects one more such argument, deserves consideration: "From heaven was given today—the Torah."[39] This Hebrew text stood in stark contrast to the important Christian hymn *Hodie apparuit*. The *payyetan* actually appropriates from the Latin neighbor's spiritual piety a text and then equips it with a meaning supportive of the Jewish community. Christianity was clearly a challenge and a lasting source of concern for the Jews, in large part because both groups claimed to be the true heirs of the same scriptural texts. Given the less tense relationship between Jews and Christians in the pre-1096 period, this kind of response could not refer to persecution and threat made by Christians against Jews at a later date. Rather, the *piyyutim* of the period reveal the reality of the attraction of Christianity; as a result doubts were raised among the Jews because of Christian theology, which claimed spiritual benefits that if true called into question Jewish theological ideals. The *Payyetanim* allowed Jews to voice a counter-argument against such thoughts and the dominant Christian society in a way that suggested Jewish beliefs were spiritually beneficial and equal to and greater than Christian dogma. They even had the potential to create a sentiment of doubt and a feeling of inferiority among Christians in a form of poetic verse that could not be easily ignored. Sometimes these ideas were expressed in a dismissive manner: "What am I, and what my life, a worm and a moth, a fool in understanding, who lacks any wisdom" (says Job in his third answer to Bildad, Job 25.6). However, what follows these types of statements are bold and hopeful comments

[39] Habermann, pp. 89–90; Hirschhorn, pp. 244–7, 249f.

like, "I build on the book of wisdom, for that a gentle word becalms my fierceness. Lord, my strength, I hope for you, illuminate me, and teach me."[40]

It is also no surprise that we find in these prayers many expressions for hope amid the tones of lament. As some scripture suggests, at the end of the days the deprivation in the present world will be turned into triumph. We hear again Shimon ben Isaac say: "Work out [O Lord,] your wonders, to preserve those who are faithful to you and whose wealth is the fear for God. So despite all their strength our adversaries will confess 'not like our rock is their rock—their rock is the rock of Israel and his holiness,' the people will say when they see his glory before their eyes."[41] Here we have a prime example of the dispute which challenges some Christian motifs in order to affirm the rightness of the own Jewish eschatological perspective. Until this final dramatic turn, rather, Israel will have to hold out. The message of this text is clear and simple. "This is what all the inhabitants of the earth shall know: if this [the captivity] happened to those who are full of wisdom, what will do those who are full of deceit," Shimon ben Isaac said in another composition.[42]

The dialectic of suffering and redemption, however, required more accurate answers: "Do you want to force the time of your redemption to come, to strip off your chains? Wait, until your time will come, I implore you." Here, with an allusion to *Song of Songs*, Shimon ben Isaac speaks as an educator who aims to avoid disappointment among his flock. But in the next verse Shimon makes a counterpoint, saying that redemption is already at hand: "My redeemer…precipitates my salvation."[43] We may conclude that both, the call for endurance and the fact that there is a sentiment of immediacy, were related to each other and through this relatedness the *payyetan* provided a way for coming to terms with a manifold challenge and contested existence, especially

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[40] Shimon ben Isaac ben Abun, Qerowa for the 2nd Day of Rosh ha-Shanah, Hebrew text Habermann, p. 107; Hirschhorn, pp. 197–9.

[41] Habermann, pp. 136–8; Hirschhorn, pp. 274–81, 284.

[42] Habermann, pp. 116–9; Hirschhorn, pp. 174–79, 199f.; on Jewish eschatology Johannes Heil, "Judaism," *Encyclopedia of Millennialism and Millennial Movements*, ed. Richard Landes (New York and London, 2000), pp. 215–21; Lester L. Grabbe and Robert D. Haak, (eds.), *Knowing the End from the Beginning. The Prophetic, the Apolcalyptic and Their Relationships* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha; suppl. 46), (London, 2003); Maria Leppäkari, *Apocalyptic Representations of Jerusalem* (Numen book series; 111), (Leiden, 2006).

[43] Habermann, p. 28; Hirschhorn, pp. 216f.

with doubts among the members of the community and perhaps with the author's own occasional doubts.

Abrupt changes of tone are a characteristic in the dramaturgy of these prayers. The composition seems to be in steady motion with single verses, being repeatedly contradicted by the following one. Only taken as a whole does the atmosphere and the context become abundantly clear, that is a complex textual event with an implicit dramatic and argumentative structure. The person of the speaker (the one who calls himself "I") shifts the voice from humans to the Almighty and back again. This procedure obviously derives from biblical examples, especially from the dramaturgy in the *Song of Songs*. But there are many such turns in the texts, especially abrupt changes of a stylistic character. Sometimes we find sequences which seem confusing at first glance: they direct the reader from lament to hope and again back to anger and suddenly to joyful ecstasy. Such compositions seem to follow no well-ordered idea and some of them go on at length. *Ahowecha ehewucha* by Shimon ben Isaac is such a one.[44] But perhaps we grasp in these examples the most ontological realization of medieval *piyyut* since the compositional structure generated a veritable therapeutic journey which allowed the faithful to reflect and to express all kinds of personal experiences, including the setbacks which were followed by times of relief and growing hope. A turn simply from doubt to hope would have been too simple a structure for a composition addressing existential needs. Hope was a precious, and also a challengeable sentiment, challenged perhaps too often so that one put it always at the end of a prayer. The historical circumstances taught that hope far from always brings immediate redemption. When integrally recited, *piyyutim* such as *Ahowecha ehewucha* mirrored a range of experiences Jews may have had during their live. The *piyyut* taught that all such experiences and sentiments, the obvious as well as the most intimate and even the shameful ones, were by no means exceptional, but that they were inevitable, also legitimate and sincere states of mind.

Still, we may wonder, how are these prayers then related to actual events and what do they tell about history? Even if we assume that some more joyful compositions may have existed at the time and were later dropped from the chain of transmission, many of the pre-1096 compositions which we know today are not very different from those

[44] See above, n. 28.

written after 1096. The latter were probably more explicit and expressive in their images, but they were similar in tone. So was there indeed nothing but a valley of tears and sorrow for the Jews of this place and time? This is what we appear to find when we read most of these prayers. But in my opinion the conclusions that historians draw when searching for the social importance of these texts must go beyond a superficial reading. For there is a rather simple counterargument, which might not always be sufficiently appreciated: if there was nothing else but a life of sadness for the Ashkenasic Jews, then why did they settle north of the Alps in the first place? These northern communities flourished and had life been nothing but toil and trouble, then why did they not simply leave? Also, why did they write these beautiful poems and prayers if the only thing in their lives were only lamentable? There are many reasons to believe that the relationship of Jews with their environment and Latin Christianity was overall bearable, at least in the sense of a pragmatic social coexistence. As Gilbert Dahan and others have demonstrated, this state may have even extended into the time after the crusades had begun.[45] So what were the bitter words of the so-called "lie poets" supposed to say? What is their truth if such "lie poets" were, as we may assume, the people (bishops, abbots) under whose's protection the Jews lived and with whom they had contact and did business, at least some them. Still any conclusions that can be drawn about this situation must be tentative. Likewise they must consider the broader context of such poetic statements.

The sort of lament/hope paradoxes in Jewish poetry of this time are not unique to medieval liturgical poetry. Adele Berlin has recently discussed a similar paradox, the lament about the destruction of Jerusalem in texts preserved at Qumran and from a time when Jerusalem was still a thriving city.[46] It seems that pessimism and lament were continuous motifs of Jewish liturgical poetry, regardless of how the world out there looked at that moment. Some characteristic motifs of this poetry were influenced by inherited conventions and come out of a spiritual and literary context of real ancient historical experiences and events.

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[45] Gilbert Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au moyen âge* (Paris, 1990); Gilbert Dahan, *The Christian Polemic Against the Jews in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, 1998).

[46] Berlin, pp. 8f. See also on the term *ochlei ha-basar chasir*—(those who eat pork) which refers to Byzantine Christians in a *piyyut* by the Palestinian *payyetan Yehuda* the study of Wout Jac. Van Bekkum, *Hebrew Poetry from Late Antiquity. Liturgical poems of Yehuda. Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, vol. 43), (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne, 1998), pp. XIV–XVI.

Another idea worth considering is if there is a broader social and literary context within which these texts find themselves. Yosef Tobi discussing the impact of Arab poetry on Sephardic poetry has argued that it would be impossible to understand medieval Hebrew poetry without examining it against its cultural and literary context.[47] If this is true the same might also apply to the relationship between Latin and Ashkenasic poetry in Northern Europe, even if we assume that the relationship between Jewish and Christian poetic workshops were not quite as intense as elsewhere. But we have nevertheless seen evidence that Ashkenasic Jews were acquainted with the core motifs of Christian hymnology, and there are good reasons to assume that some Jewish scholars had knowledge of Latin.[48] As Szövérffy has noted, "Christian Latin hymns form the main bulk of medieval poetic production",[49] and their function was clearly determined: they were written in order to complement the psalmodic cycle and—in a broader sense—to contribute to creating a spiritual place in explicit distinction to the world out there.[50] From the mid-eighth century onwards, the Christians created new hymns, and also new forms of liturgical and paraliturgical versed texts for new purposes, such as the *rhythmus*, the sequence or the verses

[47] Tobi, op. cit., p. IX.

[48] We may note, that some Jewish apologetic provided basic Christian texts even in Latin with Hebrew transliteration, instead of giving translations; see *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle-Ages. A critical Edition of the 'Nizzahon Vetus'* (Judaica Texts and Translations; 4), ed. David Berger (Philadelphia, 1979); Peter Jeffrey, "Lateinische liturgische Zitate im 'Nizahon Yasan'", *Judaica* 41 (1985), pp. 109–114.

[49] Joseph Szövérffy, *A Concise History of Medieval Latin Hymnodi. Religious Lyrics between Antiquity and Humanism* (Leyden, 1985), p. 1.

[50] A survey on Latin poetry that is worth reading despite some deliberate anti-Jewish translations in the appendix is Ruth E. Messenger, *The Medieval Latin Hymn* (Washington, D.C., 1953), for trans. see p. 102, 108; Paul Klopsch, "Die mittellateinische Lyrik," in: *Lyrik des Mittelalters I* (Lyrik des Mittelalters. Probleme und Interpretationen, ed. Heinz Bergner), (Stuttgart, 1983), pp. 25–90, 126–150; Joseph Szövérffy, *A Concise History of Medieval Latin Hymnodi. Religious Lyrics between Antiquity and Humanism* (Leyden, 1985); Peter Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985); Lori Kruckenberg-Goldenstein, *The Sequence from 1050–1150: Study of a Genre in Change*, Dissertation, University of Iowa 1997 (Ann Arbor,1997), pp. 78f., passim; Franceso Stella, *Poesia e Teologia. L'Occidente latino tra IV e VIII secolo* (Milan, 2001); see also Walter Berschin, "Sanktgallische Offiziendichtung aus ottonischer Zeit," *Lateinische Dichtungen des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts. Festgabe für Walter Bulst*, ed. Walter Berschin et al. (Heidelberg, 1981), p. 15f., 28f.; Gunilla Björkvall and Andreas Haug, "Performing Latin Verse. Text and Music in Early Medieval Versified Offices,"*The Divine Office in The Latin Middle Ages. Methodology and Source Studies, Regional Developments, Hagiography Written in Honour of Ruth Steiner*, ed. Margot E. Fassler et al. (Oxford, 2000), pp. 278–99; The *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, ed. Guido M. Dreves and Clemens Blume (Leipzig 1886–1922), provide in 55 volumes about medieval 16,000 hymns.

sung before the Gospel. Notker ("Balbulus", the "Stammerer," d. 912) of Saint Gall reports in the later ninth century about the arrival of a monk from Jumièges, a refugee from the raids of the Normans, who arrived at his monastery carrying with him an antiphonary. Though he found the collection itself full of mistakes, the encounter with the tradition from the west inspired him to write sequences of his own and to put them together in a new collection.[51] Some centers of this growing literary activity, such as Fulda/Mainz, Metz, Reichenau, or Saint Gall, were close to the places were Jewish life began to flourish in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The same can be said for France and about St. Martial, Limoges and others. And wherever these texts came from, they were in use at these places, in the monasteries and churches of the episcopal cities along the Rhine River, at Speyer, Worms, Mainz, or Cologne.

If we consider the importance of psalms recited in Latin and the vast production of new Christian hymns for monastic and ecclesiastic life[52] we may assume that this lively poetic environment strongly motivated young Jewish communities to produce a religious poetry of their own. Given this process of trans-cultural interaction which was paradoxically exclusivist and contributed to shaping complementary cultural entities,[53] we shall also be able to determine analogous characteristics between Christian and Jewish poetry of the time. What Hebrew and Christian poetry in Medieval Latin Europe from the ninth to the twelfth centuries had in common was essentially basic formal and content characteristics, such as the focus on religious content, liturgical purpose, or the intonation of the prayer. On both sides we find a preference for well crafted

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[51] Notker Balbulus, "Liber sequentiarum, praefation," *PL* 131:1003; Richard Crocker, *The Early Medieval Sequence* (Berkeley, 1977), p. 1.

[52] Alcuin of York (d. 804) gives in the introduction to his "On the use of the psalms" ("De psalmorum usu liber," PL 101:465–468) a concise description of the importance of psalms for ecclesiastical life: "In the psalms you will find…if you search them carefully with an attentive mind, more deeply felt prayer than you could ever achieve by your own thought. In the psalms you will find deeply felt confession of your sins, and perfect prayer for forgiveness and mercy from our Lord and God. And in the psalms you will find deeply felt thanksgiving for all the things that happen to you. In the psalms you confess your weakness and misery and beseech for yourself the mercy of God. For you will find all spiritual power in the psalms if you have been made worthy by God that the secrets of the psalms should be revealed to you." See also the works by Joseph Dyer, quoted above, note 32.

[53] A similar process of exclusive acculturation is considered to have been the stimulus for the emergence of *piyyut* in the Holy Land under Byzantine political and cultural domination in the sixth century: van Bekkum, "Bibel im klassischen Pijjut," p. 228f.

poems (*carmina figurate*), some with acrostics and a "biblical" flavor in the language (that is an elaboration on many biblical quotations). Even the origins of some poetic characteristics in these texts are almost the same in Jewish and Christian religious poetry: other comparisons have also been made with the Holy Land/Syria and Byzantium with Southern Italy. Both sides show an astonishing creativity in terms of content and form which generated within a few decades a rich corpus of new texts.

Not surprisingly, texts from both sides have similar basic motifs in common: praise of God, the desperate crying out to God in a time of need, and sometimes both in a single text. The lament was not an exclusive feature of the Jewish poems. Christian texts expressed occasionally the same notions of trepidation, anger, and doubt about life's troubles. This is true in many newly composed hymns of this era, but especially for those based upon the psalms. Perhaps this analysis can also allow us to gain a better understanding of the mental setting of the lament-motif in Jewish pre-1096 poetry. A monk might express his own feeling of the moment when reciting Psalm 119. Compare Psalm 119:62, 64 which read, "At midnight I rise to give you thanks for the justice of your decrees…the earth is filled with you unfailing love," Psalm 119:84, "How long must I, your servant, wait. When will you execute judgment on my persecutors?" etc. But at the same time it is important to remember that he is also often reciting this Psalm as a part of a liturgical cycle which is imposed upon him. As a result, he may or may not be reflecting his own emotional state in these prayers. Skeptics would say his rote prayers reveal nothing about his life; however, it is impossible to know for sure. In any case, clearly the verses were not meaningless to the monk. They corresponded with specific dimensions of his existence, in the preceding case in a concrete way (his spiritual life of prayer in the divine office) or in a spiritual-metaphorical way, while they do not reflect necessarily his spiritual attitude at a particular time and place. However Christian poets always had a soteriological escape hatch in prayer—that is, the ability to call upon Christ at any time and thus the ability to call upon the mystery of salvation which had already been accomplished. The Jewish perspective on this point was different, and this is why in Jewish poetry the lament was a much more dominating element. At least with regard to the earlier pre-1096 period some attempts to define a relation between Jewish and Christian hymnography have already been undertaken. But it seems that studies such as by Shirmann and Werner did not stimulate further research,

since the kind of philological analysis provided there which aimed at establishing an immediate hierarchy of influence did not go as far as it could.[54]

Most poetic characteristics, which were a part for Hebrew and Latin religious poetry, are also typical for the classical Jewish religious poetry from the Holy Land, and for their biblical archetypes (Psalms, Proverbs, and Lamentations). The medieval *payyetanim* may have found, first of all, the "familial" archetype for their compositions,[55] and from there they inherited also the notion of threat and persecution which was meaningful even in less tense days; it was a metaphor of a deeply existential dimension of reality. Even though, it is astonishing to see that the young Ashkenasic communities did not simply copy the classical compositions, but that they created a rich corpus of new *piyyutim* which replaced in the liturgies much of the older language. Given the formal analogies between Medieval Latin and Hebrew texts one should think rather about a mediated influence, a kind of complementary interaction which was generated from both rich cultures, which were formally related but distinct prayers and sacred poetry in content.[56]

Conclusions

The interdependency between Hebrew and Latin medieval poetry lies in the following: the Jewish pioneers of Ashkenas planted their traditional poetry in the fertile literary and religious ground of Christian Latin Europe. The Jews developed creativity by combining inherited forms and motifs with their own poetic expressions. What they thereby achieved one can describe as "distance-building through imitation."[57]

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[54] On analogies between Latin and Hebrew sacred poetry see Jefim Shirmann, *Hebrew Liturgical Poetry and Christian Hymnology*, in: Jewish Quarterly Review 44 (1953), pp. 123–161; Eric Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (London, 1960), pp. 234–46, 252–55.

[55] See *Piyyute Yannai* [Liturgical poems of Yannai], ed./comm. Menahem Zulay (Berlin, 1938); Nahum Meir Brunzniq, *Piyyute Yanai. Be'urim u-ferushim im hatsa'ot menumaqot le-tiqunim we-ha-shlamot: The liturgical poetry of Yannai. Commentary and Annotations with Corrections and Supplements* (Jerusalem, 2000); for more information on literature see above, n. 20.

[56] This argument comes close to recent observations on Hebrew post-1096 martyriological literature (which again was for the most part liturgical poetry): Einbinder, "Beautiful Death," pp. 4ff.

[57] See Israel Yuval, "Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages. Shared Myths, Common Language," *Demonizing the Other. Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 88–107.

But what do motifs such as "lie poets" mean? Again, the answer must be somewhat preliminary. Basically this term was an inherited idea, but even if the circumstances of the day may have been better than a term such as "lie poets" suggests, it was not a meaningless, antiquated term. There is a distance between the text of the prayer and the social reality which modern readers will grasp only if they introduce a hermeneutic filter into their reading. Then historians may gain an idea of what usually is not written about in their texts, chronicles, privileges, statutes, rabbinical decisions and others: the personality, the needs and desires of individuals and communities, the hopes which daily life did not satisfy, the ability to cope with all what remained unsettled in daily life can be determined by looking closely at the sources. It is what Amos Funkenstein has called the "split reality" of medieval Jewish existence. For daily experiences caused confusion and Jews were constantly confronted with contradictions. In this context poetic prayers provided a space of seclusion, intimacy and retreat where doubts and anger could be expressed, where issues of existential meaning could be addressed, and where the manifold experiences with the outside world could be put to order.[58] In the experience of the minority population, prayers were perhaps one of the most important mental spaces where people were free and which required no compromise of one's most heartfelt beliefs and desires. It provided the ability to eventually express a counter-reality in which the notion of difference could fully be articulated without fear of reprisal. Without an awareness of a counter-reality to what the Latin Christian world promoted, the reading and praying of Jewish poetry of the day dealt with religious struggles and hopes, the other historical sources provide only an incomplete picture of Jewish medieval existence. Surely, we have to be careful with generalizations: most of the prayers presented here were recited for *Rosh ha-Shanah* and *Yom Kippur*, the holidays which addressed the state and fate of human existence in its deepest dimensions. Indeed, Shimon ben Isaac's

[58] Amos Funkenstein, "Polemics, Responses, and Self-Reflection," *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley, 1993), p. 206. A modern writer, R. Simhah Bunam of Pzysha (d. 1827) has expressed the poles of Jewish spiritual existence most aptly: "Everyone must have two pockets, so that he can reach into the one or the other, according to his needs. In his right pocket are to be the words 'For my sake was the world created,' and in his left 'I am dust and ashes'"; see Petuchovski, "Theology and Poetry," pp. 103f. On the psychological dimension of Jewish prayer see Tzvee Zahavy, *Studies in Jewish Prayer* in *Studies in Judaism* (Lanham etc., 1990), pp. 115–118; also the concise description in Einbinder, "Beautiful Death," pp. 9f.

compositions for *Shavuot* (Feast of the Tabernacles) are significantly different with regard to tone and content than other similar prayers.[59]

A further point must be made here: the authors of these texts determined to a large extent what the issues of existential meaning were and what the appropriate response to these issues would be. The widely negative perception of the non-Jewish environment as echoed in terms such as "lie poets" do not necessarily express the thoughts of other members of the community.[60] It rather reveals how the authors supposed their coreligionists to see their environment in order to challenge, attract, and persuade Jews who lived among non-Jews concerning the truth of their religious beliefs. Their poetic texts provided an orientation and proper understanding of the world from a Jewish point of view; these texts had an educational purpose which sought in the end to dispel doubts and to keep the Jewish faithful from converting to a Latin Christianity which had its own compelling poetic tradition. The prayers framed an ideal-type of Jewish minority existence, which stood in contrast to the actual existence of medieval Jews, which was much more complex and in many ways determined by factors and influences from outside of the community. The intent of such poetry was to provide a safe ground of uncontested Jewish identity in the midst of a majority Latin Christian community. Surely at some point the voice of the *payyetan* and the voices of the Jewish community become one and the same. Otherwise, these compositions would not have survived and have come to us.

Putting these prayers in a broader mental-social context helps scholars regard their character and meaning in an appropriate manner. On the one hand scholarship can simply look at the subject of the religious poetic prayers and learn a good deal, however, most texts "speak" in the plural form, "We." Thus, it is the community to which the *payyetan* gave its voice and as a result scholars learn about community from their words. The *piyyut* gathered individual voices together and thereby reflects community. One can put it even in a Habermasian way, namely that they kept the flock of the faithful together, and the more prayers the *payyetanim* contributed to the order of the services, the longer the

[59] Habermann, "Piyyute R. Shim'on b. Yizhaq," pp. 42–46, 87–90; Hirschhorn, "Tora," pp. 230–50. See also the compositions for Shavuot by Isaac ben Moshe, who was probably a victim of the pogrom at Mainz 1096: Hirschhorn, ibid., pp. 334–44; see Davidson, "Thesaurus," vol. 4, p. 419.

[60] See also Einbinder, "Beautiful Death," pp. 8ff.

community would remain united in prayer, and be able to express their deepest fears and hopes together as one people, united against the dangers of the world.[61]

Piyyut also established a border between daily secular and spiritual life. Individual experiences—many of them necessary and nice, others disturbing and confusing—belonged to the sphere of daily life; Jewishness would be experienced in the midst of a Latin Christian community, but also in the midst of family and in the *qehila* ("community").

Another observation relates to the meaning of history in Jewish medieval religious poetry. There are many hints to historic events and to experiences of Jews encountering the outside (namely the Latin Christian) world. Yet none of these many examples provides a historical record in a narrower sense, that is, information about names, dates, and places. All that is spoken about remains somewhat vague and timeless. It refers to nothing specific, or better yet, it refers to everything in a universal way. The deeply expressive and ornate, but also disturbingly indistinct language reveals the broader historical experience of Israel, and that no matter what the confusion and doubt there is still hope in a faithful God who has not forgotten His people. The spirit at work here, especially before 1096, and even afterward, was by no means a-historical. It was not static, and it was also more than a "paradigmatic" spirit as well.[62] It is difficult to find in our own terminological household the appropriate words for the manner by which *piyyutim* (and other post-biblical sources) cover the scope of history, historical experience, and historical realities. Some use the term "meta-history," to help nuance the distinction between less specifically oriented historiography focused on religious poetry from the type of historiography of this

[61] See Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, trans. by Thomas McCarthy*, two vols. (Boston, 1984–87); also Martin Kavka, Comment on Jakob E. Meskin, "Textual Reasoning, Modernity and the Limits of History," *Textual Reasonings. Jewish Philosophy and Text Study at the End of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Ochs and Nancy Levene (London, 2002), p. 176.

[62] *Piyyut* is perhaps also a good object to reconsider Neusner's zealous critic on Yerushalmis reading of rabbinic attitudes of history: see Jacob Neusner, "Halakha Past Time: Why no History in Rabbinic Judaism?," *The Halakha; Historical and Religious Perspectives* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 134–157: Given that Yerushalmis' reading is too optimistic in terms of the historical sensitivity of rabbinical sages, Neusner's concept of paradigmatic thinking is too narrow and static when understood as an anti-linear concept of time with even the cyclical return of specific events (156f.). See also Wallenstein, p. 10f.; and Johannes Heil, "Beyond 'History and Memory'. Traces of Jewish Histiography in the Middle Ages" in MJS online Volume 1(2007108), pp. 29–71.

period which provides particular historical details in a specific context. We may call this approach an "interlinear analysis of history-writing" which looks at somewhat hidden Jewish glosses on Jewish life (namely poetic prayers) in a predominantly Christian environment; this provides a certain analysis of a general attitude toward mood and context which needs to be contrasted with other historical writing.[63] The language of *piyyutim* up to 1096 is meta-historical insofar as it does not deal specifically with current events, but rather with experiences and commentary on those experiences especially related to the hope for God's lasting loyalty and future salvation of a suffering people, in this case under a majority Latin Christian world without pogroms. Those who simply use basic historiographical methodology have missed some nuances of interpretation, however, by doing this. In some sense what we have in the sources is a meta-historical reality until 1096, and then, even though the language remains almost unchanged in the poetic context, it turned into a more commonly understood dramatic history after 1096 as persecution gave specific depth to the history.

In conclusion, some other local northern realities found their way into the poetic prayers and into the closed space of pious intimacy. Some of the poetry mentions the beauty of roses and imagery concerning the coming spring; but Shimon ben Isaac also tells his readers in the composition for the Shabbat during the Pessah week that "the joke was broken, I lacked nothing, the faithful shepard (*neeman roé*) had gained the victory, and see: the winter was over."[64] This once again is a biblical reference to the *Song of Songs* 2:11: *hine ha-staw awar*. It is not hard to imagine a *payyetan* sitting by a river in Mainz watching the breaking ice on the waters after long weeks of darkness and coldness.

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[63] What this means can best be illustrated with regard to the legend about Rabbi Amnon of Mainz who is said to have reappeared three days (!) after his execution among his disciples (!) and dictated the text of *U-netane toqef*: see Marcus, "A Jewish-Christian Symbiosis," pp. 497f.; on counter-historical history-writing see also Lucia Raspe, "Emmeram von Regensburg, Amram von Mainz: Ein christlicher Heiliger in der jüdischen Überlieferung," *Neuer Anbruch. Zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur* (minima judaica, vol. 2), ed. Michael Brocke et al., (Berlin, 2001), pp. 221–41; the most valuable approach is still Amos Funkenstein, "History, Counter-History and Memory," *Probing the Limits of Representation*, ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), pp. 66–81; see also David Biale, "Counter-History and Jewish Polemics Against Christianity: The *Sefer toldot yeshu* and the *Sefer zerubavel*," *Amos Funkenstein's Perceptions of Jewish History: An Evaluation of His Works by His Students = Jewish Social Studies* 6.1 (1999) pp. 130–145; for the term see also Susannah Heschel, "Jewish Studies as Counterhistory," *Insider—Outsider. American Jews and Multiculturalism*, ed. David Biale, (Berkeley, 1998), pp. 102–115.

[64] See above, n. 38, quote from Hirschhorn 218.

While they did not need to know the *Song of Songs* to rejoice deeply in the coming of spring, they nevertheless used its words to express their own emotions and feelings. Similarly the opposite was also true, namely that there was also dreamy reflection about a hot, dry summer day in a composition by Meshullam ben Kalonymos for *Yom Kippur*: "What they were seeking for came reviving like the refreshing snow after the heat of a hot harvest day."[65] Those Jews who lived on the Iberian Peninsula, for example, would hardly have understood this textual picture with its strange combination of seasonal phenomena in the same way as the people of the Rhineland would have. Indeed, the members of the communities at Speyer, Worms, and Mainz knew that such things could happen during the late summer harvest season in the plains between the hills along the central Rhine valley; to them such words were meaningful. In such moments Ashkenasic liturgical poetry was thoroughly northern European poetry—written in Hebrew offering to its audience a clear look at the cold dark reality of their world, while offering them the hope and dreams of a warmer reality to come.

[65] Meshullam ben Kalonymos, Seder Avoda for Mussaf Yom Kippur, Hebrew text Goldschmidt, "Mahzor," pp. 201–8; Hirschhorn, "Thora," pp. 102–17.

SECTION 4

PRAYER DURING THE FOURTEENTH TO FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

JAN VAN RUUSBROEC ON THE TRINITY, PRAYER, AND THE NATURE OF CONTEMPLATION

Rik Van Nieuwenhove

Introduction

The end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries represent a watershed in the history of Western spirituality: it is at this time that we find the origin of a modern understanding of spirituality—an understanding in which mysticism and theology have become separate; and in which mysticism is all too often understood in terms of an immediate, private, unmediated experience of the divine.[1]

Some authors writing in the fourteenth century display an awareness of major changes in the religious climate, including specific changes in the ways meditation and mysticism are understood. One of these authors is Jan van Ruusbroec (1293–1381).[2] During his lifetime references to Neoplatonic discourse gradually disappear; a further severance of theology and spirituality takes place; and a more experiential, more subjectivist approach to spirituality becomes popular. Whereas Bonaventure, for instance, considered himself a "mystical theologian," a scholastic and mystical author, deeply influenced by the Pseudo-Dionysian corpus that had been relatively recently revived in the West,

[1] The work of William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, first published in 1902, both chronicles and further reinforces this modern approach to mysticism. It is an approach that appeals to those who have grown disenchanted with the institutional Church and its religion. After all, James explicitly downplays the doctrinal elements, opening the door for what in the eyes of its critics at least seems nothing else but a solipsistic pursuit of religious self-gratification, strangely insensitive to the apophaticism that characterises traditional patristic and medieval theology. For a brilliant overview of the changing nature of mystical theology and the causes of this change, the reader should consult Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God. A Study in the Negativity of Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, 1996).

[2] For a more in-depth overview of his thought, see my study *Jan van Ruusbroec, Mystical Theologian of the Trinity* (Notre Dame, 2003).

authors like Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Sienna, Richard Rolle and others clearly write in a very different climate.

Focusing on the writings of Ruusbroec will give me the opportunity to illustrate that he was aware of these changes which were to eventually lead to the present-day understanding of spirituality; more significantly, it will also allow me to examine his specifically Trinitarian response to what he calls "the natural way." I will thereby be able to reveal the significance of his theology of the Trinity for his understanding of prayer, contemplation, and the acme of the spiritual journey, namely the so-called "common life."

It is no coincidence that we must turn to an author of the Low Countries to find a witness to the changing nature of spirituality. In the thirteenth century Flanders (together with Northern Italy) had enjoyed an unprecedented economic growth due to a flourishing textile industry, coupled with growing urbanization and increasing literacy among the laity. In general the period 1250–1450 was a period of cultural flowering: this is the time of the magnificent town-halls and cathedrals in Bruges, Ghent, and Brussels, and the time of artistic revolution in the world of painting with figures such as Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Memlinc, and others.

As suggested it was also a time of religious change and fermentation. The Low Countries saw the origins of the fascinating Beguine movement and produced some of its finest exponents, such as Hadewijch, Beatrice of Nazareth, Marguerite Porete, amongst others. By the time of Ruusbroec's death in 1381, Geert Grote had already started the movement known as the Modern Devotion, the most famous exponent of which is *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. Despite the fact that Grote is reported to have visited Ruusbroec in his monastery in Groenendaal and translated some of Ruusbroec's key works (originally written in Middle Dutch) into Latin, we have effectively entered a new world. Whereas in Ruusbroec's works (such as *The Spiritual Espousals*) we encounter one of the last major representatives of the medieval tradition of mystical theology, freely drawing upon Neoplatonic and patristic sources, thereby developing a speculative and theologically informed spirituality, *The Imitation of Christ* presents us with a homely, practical spirituality devoid of any speculative elements. This new kind of spirituality clearly appealed to the new age. Whereas *The Imitation of Christ* proved extremely popular throughout Europe, Ruusbroec's writings exerted initially only a modest influence. During his lifetime his works were translated into German and Latin, and they exerted an

influence upon Willem Jordaens, Hendrik Herp (Henricus Harphius), and the enigmatic author of *The Temple of Our Soul* and *The Evangelic Pearl*.[3] Despite Surius's translation into Latin of Ruusbroec's complete works in 1552 which found a fairly wide dissemination (and which may have influenced the Spanish School) the theological and cultural climate had changed too much for Ruusbroec's thought to profoundly influence the theological scene. It was only in the second half of the twentieth century that major Catholic theologians such as von Balthasar and Rahner have begun to take note of this fascinating author.[4]

In what follows I will show 1. how Ruusbroec specifically chronicles and rejects meditative practices that are experiential and quietist in nature, writing at a time when the nature of spirituality is changing from being apophatic and intrinsically linked with theology, the sacraments and the life of the Church, to being experiential and sometimes nothing but an individualistic quest severed from a proper theological and ecclesial context. To understand Ruusbroec's reservations about quietist practices we need to examine 2. his Trinitarian theology. This will pave the way for an exposition of Ruusbroec's description of 3. the spiritual transformation of the person in the active, inner and contemplative lives, which culminates in 4. the so-called "common life." I finish this contribution by returning to the first point, namely his critique of quietism—a critique which we can only fully understand having outlined his main teachings. When discussing the inner life we will also specifically examine how his Trinitarian theology shapes his understanding of prayer.

The Natural Way: Meditation and Mysticism

The following extract is taken from one of Ruusbroec's major works, *Die Geestelike Brulocht* (*The Spiritual Espousals*). In it he describes the pursuit of what he calls the natural way, or what scholars today would call

[3] For these authors and others influenced by Ruusbroec, see K. Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik. Band IV. Die niederländische Mystik des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1999). Extracts of the works of these authors will be published in R. Faesen, H. Rolfson and R. Van Nieuwenhove (eds.), *Late Medieval Mysticism of the Low Countries* (New York), in press.

[4] Karl Rahner singles Ruusbroec out as one of a handful of authentically Trinitarian thinkers in his little work on the Trinity (London, 1980). Von Balthasar discusses Ruusbroec's theology in *The Glory of the Lord, Vol. V The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age* (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 67–78.

natural mysticism, in which people pursue *ledicheit*, i.e. sheer inactivity or emptiness:

> All creatures are naturally inclined to rest, and therefore rest is sought by the good and the evil in many a way. Now consider: when a person is bare and unassailed by images with respect to his senses, and empty, without activity, with respect to his higher faculties, then he enters into rest by mere nature. And all people can find and possess this rest in themselves in mere nature, without the grace of God, if only they can empty themselves of images and of all works… But now consider the manner in which a person surrenders himself to this natural rest (*naturlijcker rasten*). It is a sitting-still without any practice within or without, in emptiness (*een stille sitten sonder oefeninghe van binnen ochte van buten, in eere ledicheit*), so that rest may be found and may abide unhindered. But rest practiced in this way is not lawful, for it produces blindness in a person, in ignorance, and a sinking down into himself without activity. And this rest is nothing but an emptiness into which a person falls and he forgets himself and God and everything with respect to any activity.[5]

The quietist meditation Ruusbroec describes is not sinful in itself. After all, Ruusbroec asserts that this "rest" is natural, and everything created is good: "In itself, this rest is no sin, for it is in all people by nature, if they could empty themselves. But when one wishes to practice and possess it without acts of virtue, then a person falls into a spiritual pride and into a self-complacency of which one is seldom cured."[6] Also, as I will attempt to show forthwith, Ruusbroec too sees "rest" as part of his spiritual ideal but he understands it in a radically different manner. In the text we have just quoted, "rest" is psychological in nature: our faculties (memory or mind; intellect and will) become empty, vacuous and quiet: we sit still, in quietness, becoming empty of all thoughts and imaginings. Whereas our faculties would normally be engaging with things and issues *outside* of ourselves they nevertheless also have an inclination to withdraw *within* into stillness. It is this "natural rest" that is being cultivated in quietist meditation: "They stand in a pure passivity without any activity upwards or downwards, just like a loom which itself is inactive and awaits its master, when he wishes to work. For if they did anything, God would be hindered in his activity, and this is why they are void of all virtue, and so empty that they wish

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[5] *Brulocht*, b. 2301–18 from *Jan van Ruusbroec, Opera Omnia*, Vol. III, (Turnhout, 1985), ed. in chief G. de Baere, *CCCM* ciii, *Die Geestelike Brulocht*. The numbers refer to the relevant lines in the original Middle Dutch text.

[6] *Brulocht*, b. 2339–41.

neither to thank nor to praise God, and they have neither knowledge, nor love nor will, nor prayer, nor desire."[7]

Insofar as they attempt to attain union with God without charitable activity and the aid of God's grace, they sin against the Holy Spirit who bestows all grace; insofar as they look for the divine within themselves, in their own essence, they sin against the Father: "And this is our common belief from the beginning of the world, that God has created angels and all creatures; we have not made ourselves . . . And these people who do not want to be like [God] but to be God himself, are more evil and more damned than Lucifer and all his ilk."[8] The final sin Ruusbroec identifies is against the nature of God as Trinity. Whereas his opponents pursue quietist and passive meditation, Ruusbroec refers to the divine nature to refute this erroneous practice: God "is an eternal worker; he gives us his grace and demands of us eternal living works, that is, that we should confess, know and love, thank and praise him; these are eternal, living works, which he works in us and with us, for they begin in him, and through him they are brought to perfection in him."[9] As God himself is "eternal activity" (*een eewich werc*)[10] in his intra-trinitarian processions we too should engage in a practice of knowing and loving God and perform charitable works and acts of prayer and worship in distinct contrast to those who pursue inactivity and quietist emptiness—an inactivity Ruusbroec links with the nothingness of sin that Lucifer embraced: "Those who were disobedient, and despised God's command and his works, by pride, fell down from heaven into the dark nothingness of sin and into a false inactivity (*dat donckere niet der sonden ende in een valsce ledicheit*), so that they can never again know nor love, thank nor praise God, nor practice virtue."[11]

To understand why he rejects this quietist meditation, and to see how we can properly develop the dynamic of out-going, in-going and "resting" of our faculties we need to examine Ruusbroec's theology of the Trinity.

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[7] *Brulocht*, b. 2428–34.
[8] *Beghinen*, 2a 113–19.
[9] *Beghinen*, 2a 312–16.
[10] *Beghinen*, 2a 347.
[11] *Beghinen*, 2a 332–36.

Ruusbroec's Theology of the Trinity

Like other medieval theologians Ruusbroec perceives a link between the two intra-divine processions on the one hand, and creation and salvation, on the other.[12] For instance, in the third book of *Die Geestelike Brulocht*, which I will discuss below, Ruusbroec first establishes the link between the generation of the Son from the Father, and our creation and enlightenment. He then (c. 211–36) continues to make clear the link between the procession of the Spirit as Love from the mutual contemplation of Father and Son, and our loving participation in the divinity. The Father knows (through the Son) and loves (through the Spirit) the world he creates. Ruusbroec summarizes: "For just as the Father beholds all things anew, without cease, in the birth of his Son, thus all things are loved anew by the Father and by the Son in the outflowing of the Holy Spirit."[13] Our spiritual transformation too is shaped by this intra-trinitarian dynamics; therefore, in order to understand what Ruusbroec has to say on contemplation and prayer it is essential to sketch his theology of the Trinity first.

Ruusbroec espouses traditional medieval Augustinian ideas but develops them by adopting the scholastic notion of *regiratio* (or return, *reditus, epistrophe*) which he links especially with the Holy Spirit.[14] Like Bonaventure, Ruusbroec teaches that the Father generates the Word out of his fruitful paternal nature (divine nature as *bonum diffusivum sui*), and from their mutual contemplation the Spirit proceeds as a Bond of Love. However, where Ruusbroec radically differs from his predecessors is in his assertion that the divine Persons flow back (*regiratio*) into the divine being or essence in which they find an enjoyable rest or fruition. In short Ruusbroec identifies three "moments" in the intra-divine dynamics: an out-going moment (generation of the Word and procession of the Spirit); an in-going moment (through the Spirit as bond of Love between Father and Son the divine Persons flow back); and a moment of rest or fruition in the inner divinity. Because of the fruitfulness of the divine nature, the Persons will then again proceed, in a never-ending dynamic of going-out (generation of the Word; proces-

[12] Here the reader should consult the magnificent work by G. Emery, *La Trinité Créatrice* (Paris, 1996) and, in shorter form: "Trinity and Creation" from R. Van Nieuwenhove and J. Wawrykow (eds.), *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, 2004), 58–76.

[13] *Brulocht*, c. 231–36.

[14] See *Jan van Ruusbroec, Mystical Theologian of the Trinity*, pp. 77–99.

sion of the Spirit), return into the divine unity, and blissful fruition in the perichoretic unity. As Ruusbroec puts it in a famous passage that reveals something of the extraordinarily dynamic nature of his Trinitarian thinking: "God is a flowing, ebbing sea, which flows without cease into all his beloved, according to each one's needs and dignity. And he is ebbing back in again, drawing all those whom he has endowed on heaven and earth together with all they have and can do."[15] This passage illustrates the close link between the intra-divine processions and return, on the one hand, and our participation through grace in them, on the other. In another passage Ruusbroec describes in somewhat more scholarly fashion the intra-trinitarian dynamics as follows:

> The noble nature of God which is the principal cause of all creatures, is fruitful; therefore it cannot remain in tranquility in the unity of paternity because of the stirring (*gherinen*) of fruitfulness, but it has to give birth without cease to the eternal Wisdom, i.e., the Son of the Father. The Son is always being born, has been born, and remains unborn; yet it is one Son. Insofar as the Father contemplates the Son, the eternal Wisdom, and all things in the same Wisdom, he is born and is another Person than the Father…
>
> Neither from the fruitful nature (this is paternity), nor from the fact that the Father gives birth to his Son, does Love—this is the Holy Spirit—flow; but because of the fact that the Son is born as another Person, distinct from the Father, in which the Father sees him as born and all creatures in him and with him, as the life of all things; and because of the fact that the Son beholds the Father as fruitful and giving birth, and himself [= the Son] and all things in the Father (this is a mutual beholding in the same fruitful nature): from this, Love, which is the Holy Spirit and a bond between the Father and the Son and between the Son and the Father, is brought about. With this Love the Persons are permeated and through it they embrace and flow back into the unity from which the Father is constantly giving birth. And when they have flown back into the unity, there is nevertheless no rest because of the fruitfulness of the nature. This giving birth and flowing back into unity is the work of the Trinity; thus there is threeness of Persons and oneness of nature.[16]

What is of special interest to us are the implications Ruusbroec's dynamic theology of the Trinity has for his understanding of his spiritual ideal, the "common life," and the rejection of quietist meditation it

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[15] *Brulocht*, b. 1148–51.

[16] Jan van Ruusbroec, *Werken*, Vol. I, *Dat Rijcke der Ghelieven*, J. B. Pouckens and L. Reypens, ed. (Tielt, 1944), p. 60 (my trans.). A critical edition of this work is in press and will appear in *Opera Omnia*, ed. in chief Guido de Baere.

implies. Indeed, it is because the Trinity is characterized by both *activity* (in the divine processions of Son and Spirit and their return) and "*rest*" or "enjoyment" (in the perichoretic union) that Ruusbroec has to reject a spirituality that centers around quietist meditation.

The Spiritual Transformation of the Person

The Active and Inner Lives

Ruusbroec distinguishes between a. an active life—by which he means both the inner struggle to master the passions and acquire virtue (the Evagrian *praktikè*), and a life of charitable service to our fellowmen; b. an inner or God-yearning life (a life of growing interiority); and c. a contemplative life (not to be understood in the sense of a life led by contemplative monks but rather used as synonymous with continuous contemplation).[17] His major work, *The Spiritual Espousals* (*Die Geestelike Brulocht*) is structured accordingly into three books.[18] However, this tri-partite structure is deliberately qualified by Ruusbroec's claim that the so-called "common life," which combines contemplation and activity, is the highest spiritual ideal. For a person who has attained the common life, "contemplation and action come just as readily to him and he is perfect in both."[19]

The tri-partite structure must be understood in the light of the three Trinitarian "moments" discussed earlier: the active life is an "out-going" life; the inner life as a life of growing interiority is "in-going" while the contemplative life is the state of "rest" or "enjoyment." What complicates the issue is that each life, in turn, displays the three Trinitarian dimensions. For instance, the contemplative life (which is generally described as a life of rest or fruition) is in turn characterized by moments of "going-out" (the generation of the Word), return (through the Spirit) and enjoyment (in the unity of the divine essence), as we will see later.

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[17] *Brulocht*, b. 2244–47: "Now understand: God comes *without cease* in us, with intermediary and without intermediary, and demands of us enjoyment and activity, and that the one should not be hindered by the other, but rather always be fortified" [my italics].

[18] *Brulocht*, 47–55.

[19] *Vanden Blinkenden Steen*, 948–49.

When discussing the inner life Ruusbroec also examines a number of phenomena moderns have come to associate especially with mysticism, such as "spiritual drunkenness," "jubilation," "impetuosity and disquietude," "desolation" or abandonment by God in our sensual nature, and the "divine touch" (a notion later adopted by St. John of the Cross) in the unity of our spirit.[20] The fact that Ruusbroec rejects an experiential, quietist understanding of union with God therefore does not mean that he does not acknowledge the effects of grace on our sensual or affective nature. When dealing with the "divine touch," for instance, Ruusbroec points out that this touch itself is beyond words and can never be grasped by our intelligence; but it does allow us to "place" affective states in the context of the workings of God's grace:

> You must know that the grace of God flows down to the lower powers, and touches the heart of man, and from that comes heartfelt affection and sensitive desire for God. And affection and desire penetrate the heart and senses, flesh and blood, and all the corporeal nature and cause in him strain and restlessness in his body, so that often he does not know what to do with himself. He is in a state of a man who is so drunk that he is no longer in possession of himself. And from this comes much eccentric behavior, which these soft-hearted men cannot control, that is, they often lift their heads to heaven with eyes wide-open because of restless desire; sometimes joy, sometimes weeping, now singing and now shouting, now weal and now woe, and often both together at once…[21]

There is an almost hermeneutical awareness here: we all undergo emotional states but the mystical theologian "situates" them in the context of the operation of divine grace. The operation itself remains beyond our intellectual grasp; only the created "effects" can be perceived. Nevertheless, these "phenomena" only belong to an intermediary state of the spiritual journey and we should not pay more attention to them than we should; we may esteem them insofar as they conform to the Scriptures and to the truth, and no more; one who wishes to give them more value is "easily deceived."[22]

Before we examine Ruusbroec's discussion of contemplation we will deal with the notion of prayer—which plays a central role in the process of our growing interiority.

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[20] See *Brulocht* b. 395 (*gheestelijcke dronckenheit*), 578 (*jubilacie*), 514 (*orewoet ende onghedueric heit)*, 730ff. (*ghelatentheit, armoede*), b. 1466ff. (*gherinen*).

[21] *Boecsken der Verclaringhe*, 307–18 from Jan van Ruusbroec, *Opera Omnia*, Vol. I, (Turnhout, 1989), ed. in chief G. de Baere, *CCCM* ci.

[22] *Brulocht*, b. 589–91.

The Role of Prayer

Ruusbroec acted as a parish priest in Brussels for twenty-five years and as prior in the newly-founded monastery of Groenendaal for almost forty years. For him the need for prayer and faithful participation in the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church was quite simply a given. As we have seen earlier, throughout his works he condemns those who claim to be able to do without prayer, sacraments and the Church. Two elements make his views on prayer of particular interest. First, there is the fact that he sees prayer as a participation in the Trinitarian dynamics discussed earlier; and secondly, what Ruusbroec writes in general about the need to die to self-centeredness and attachment also extends to prayer. Let's examine these issues in some more detail.

Prayer occupies a unique position in Ruusbroec's Trinitarian spirituality for it mirrors both the active or out-going aspect and the in-going dimensions of the Trinitarian dynamics. Prayer, for Ruusbroec, is an essential aspect of our *active*, loving response to the bestowal of God's grace—a bestowal which is itself nothing but the result of the active procession of the Spirit or Love from the Father and the Son. Therefore, those who fail to respond to grace in prayer and virtuous activity, merely pursuing solipsistic quietism, fail to mirror the active dimension of the intra-trinitarian life.[23] Behind this unwillingness to respond to God's grace lurks a profound pride that ultimately refuses to acknowledge one's created status. Claiming that he is divine by nature, the sinner claims: "I neither hope, nor love, nor do I have confidence nor faith in God; I neither pray nor adore, for I give God neither honor nor advantage above myself. For in God there is no distinction: neither Father, nor Son, nor Holy Ghost; there is nothing but one God; and with him I am one, and the same one that he is."[24]

Ruusbroec also hints at the idea that praising and honoring God also represents a participation in the *in-going* dynamic of the Trinity: "Furthermore, just as the Spirit of our Lord sends us out to live in virtues and in all good works, so also he draws us into inward practices and demands and commands us, to thank and praise God, love

[23] *Beghinen*, 2a 48–63: "Now they imagine that they are above the Holy Spirit and that they need neither him nor his grace…This is why they do not want to know or ken, nor will nor love, nor thank nor praise, nor desire nor have, for they want to be above God and without God and neither seek nor find God anywhere and to be quit of all virtues."

[24] *Beghinen*, 2a 93–98.

and honor him eternally and always…"[25] Prayer constitutes the most important aspect of the "inward practices" by which we are drawn into God—thereby reflecting, and participating in through grace, the *regiratio* of the divine Persons. This kind of prayer is interior, and alien to those who merely "go through the motions." Criticizing those within the Church who adopt a worldly attitude to all things, including prayer, he states: "They pray with their lips, but their heart does not savor what it speaks about, namely the secret marvel that is hidden in Scripture and in the sacraments and in their office. They do not feel it at all. That is why they are so coarse and obtuse and unenlightened in divine truth."[26] Finding "the secret marvel" through prayer is a matter of concentrated focus or intention. In a treatise written for a young Clare nun he admonishes her:

> Furthermore, when you read or sing or pray, if you are able to understand the words, then observe the meaning of the words, for you serve before the countenance of God. And if you do not understand the words, or if you are elevated to a higher state, then stay with that and keep your simple sight on God as long as you can and mind and love always the honor of God. If alien thoughts and alien images fall into your mind during your office of hours or during your practice, no matter about what, it is all the same: when you become aware of this, and come to yourself, do not fear, for we are unstable, but turn yourself back hastily with intention and love to God. For even though the fiend shows you his goods and his wares, if you do not buy of it with affection, it does not stay with you.[27]

If we are to pursue "a higher state" and cultivate a loving devotion for God, we should nevertheless not become attached to this devotion or the consolations it brings. This brings me to the second point of significance. He considers people who pay heed to the spiritual consolations as imperfect because…

> …(t)hey possess their interiority with attachment, because they consider clinging to God in love as the best and the very highest they can or want to reach…And even if they always want to live in the service of God and please him forever, they do not want to die in God to self-centeredness of spirit and live the life that conforms to that of God. And even if they count for little all the comfort and the repose that may come from

[25] *Beghinen*, 1, 694–98.
[26] *Brulocht*, b. 1307–11.
[27] *Een Spieghel der Eeuwigher Salicheit*, 180–90 from *Jan van Ruusbroec, Opera Omnia*, Vol. VIII, (Turnhout, 2001), ed. in chief G. de Baere, *CCCM* cviii.

> outside, they count for much the gifts of God and their inner practices, the consolation and the sweetness they feel inside. And so they tarry by the wayside and do not die completely to be given the highest victory in a love that is bare and beyond manner.[28]

Persons who seek consolation and sweetness in their spiritual practices and prayer are considered "spiritually unchaste." They will "pray and desire many special things from God" but they are nevertheless deceived: "In their lust, they are entirely inclined towards inward savor and towards the spiritual ease of their nature. And this is called spiritual unchastity, for it is a disordered inclination of natural love, which is always turned back upon itself and seeks its ease in all things."[29]Again, Ruusbroec does not want us to dispense with prayer and participation in the life of the Church (including the sacramental life); but these "practices" should not become another source of attachment and spiritual self-gratification—for it is this kind of possessiveness that the mystical theologian hopes to transcend. Prayer and inner practices are ends in their own right, as is love itself: "Live and praise, intend and love and serve his eternal honor, not for reward, nor for comfort, nor for taste, nor for consolation, nor for anything that might come to you from it. For true love does not seek what is hers; and therefore she has God and all things."[30] When we have attained this kind of detachment and single-minded focus on God we are ready to contemplate God.

The Contemplative Life

The third and final book of *Die Geestelike Brulocht* is dedicated to the contemplative life. For Ruusbroec contemplation is not a fleeting practice separated from the Christian life as a whole. Nor does it mean "contemplative prayer" to be pursued in the solitariness of a monastic cell. It is rather receptivity or openness, a theocentric disposition, which allows the core of our being to continually (*sonder onderlaet*)[31] participate in the processions of the divine Persons.

Contemplation "establishes us in a state of purity which transcends all understanding."[32] Few people can attain this state because of their

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[28] *Vanden Blinkenden Steen*, 388–411.
[29] *Brulocht*, b. 2374–78.
[30] *Spieghel*, 46–50.
[31] *Brulocht*, c. 111.
[32] *Brulocht*, c. 8–9.

incapacity and the hidden nature of the divine light.[33] In order to understand it we must have died to ourselves and be living in God, turning our gaze to the eternal light which is shining in the ground of our spirit. Ruusbroec structures his description of contemplation in Book III of *Die Geestelike Brulocht* around the verse from Matthew 25:6: "See/the Bridegroom is coming/go out/to meet Him."

First there is a preparatory stage ["See"]. Ruusbroec enumerates three elements necessary for a person to engage in contemplation: "The first is that a person must be interiorly well-ordered, interiorly unhindered, and as empty of all his exterior works as if he were not even performing them, for if he is interiorly disturbed through any virtuous work he will be troubled by images, and as long as this lasts he will not be able to contemplate."[34] Two observations ought to be made: firstly, Ruusbroec does not say that contemplation excludes exterior works (as if a life of charitable activity and contemplation were mutually exclusive, at least momentarily). Rather, he suggests that we should remain empty, or detached, from our works *as if* we were not performing them. Secondly, contemplation requires an imagelessness which will make us receptive to the divine resplendence or light (about which I will say more below). The notions of imagelessness and the importance of divine light in contemplation are clearly reminiscent of a spirituality indebted to the Evagrian tradition.[35] The second element necessary for contemplation is the need "to interiorly cleave to God with devoted intention (*meyninghen*) and love." As long as we maintain this theocentric focus or intention, we can contemplate.[36] The third element is closely associated with the first: we must lose ourselves in "a state devoid of particular form or measure, a state of darkness in which all contemplatives blissfully lose their way and are never again able to find themselves in a creaturely way."[37]

[33] *Brulocht*, c. 26–28.

[34] *Brulocht*, c. 54–59; translation by J. A. Wiseman in *John Ruusbroec: The Spiritual Espousals and Other Works*. Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1985), pp. 146–47.

[35] This observation, if correct, challenges the usual accounts according to which Evagrian spirituality did not exert any significant influence (even if only indirectly) upon Western spirituality. See J. Bamberger's "Introduction" to his translation of *Evagrius Ponticus, The Praktikos & Chapters on Prayer* (Kalamazoo, 1981), p. lviii, note 141 where he observes the similarities between Evagrius and Ruusbroec.

[36] *Brulocht*, c. 60–63. See also chapters four and five in this Volume.

[37] *Brulocht*, c. 64–67; translation by Wiseman, p. 147.

In the abyss of darkness where we have died to ourselves, the revelation of God begins ("The Bridegroom is coming"). As a Christian Neoplatonist, Ruusbroec develops a rich, exemplarist theology of the soul as image of God. This image-theology posits a close link between our eternal life in God as exemplar on the one hand, and our created being (which participates in this eternal exemplar) on the other hand. Also, the eternal coming of the Bridegroom in the soul is linked with the eternal generation of the Word from the Father. Thus, in order to understand Ruusbroec's account of contemplation two doctrinal issues must be kept in mind: a. our created existence participates in our eternal spiritual existence as idea in God; b. this eternal existence as idea in God shares in the intra-trinitarian dynamics: the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit, and their return in the divine essence.[38] Hence the intra-trinitarian life also shapes the nature of contemplation, which is described in terms of "going-out" [part three of Mt 25:6] with the divine Word or Light:

> We shall find that the bosom of the Father is our own ground and origin, in which our life and being have their beginning. From out of this ground, that is, from out of the Father and all that lives in him, there shines an eternal resplendence, which is the birth of the Son…All persons who have been raised above their creaturely state into the contemplative life are one with this resplendence and are this resplendence itself. Through this divine light—and as regards their uncreated being—they see, feel, and find themselves to be the same simple ground from out of which the resplendence shines without measure in a divine way and in which it eternally abides devoid of particular form according to the simplicity of the divine essence. For this reason interior, contemplative persons will go out in accordance with the mode of their contemplation, above and beyond reason and distinction and their own created being. Through an eternal act of gazing accomplished by means of the unborn light, they are transformed (*ghetransformeert*) and become one with that same light with which they see and which they see. It is in this way that contemplatives pursue the eternal image to which they have been created; they contemplate God and all things without distinction in a simple act of

[38] *Brulocht*, c. 135–41; translation by Wiseman, p. 149: "This eternal going forth and this eternal life which we eternally have and are in God apart from ourselves is a cause of our created being in time. Our created being depends upon this eternal being and is one with it in its essential subsistence. This eternal being and life which we have and are in God's eternal wisdom is like God, for it both abides eternally and without distinction in the divine essence and, through the birth of the Son, flows forth eternally as a distinct entity…"

> seeing in the divine resplendence. This is the noblest and most beneficial contemplation which a person can attain in this life.[39]

I would like to make a number of observations. First, it is significant that Ruusbroec writes that our contemplation extends to God *and all things*. This illustrates that Ruusbroec's concept is broader than merely a contemplation of God. There is also a contemplative way of seeing the things of creation. Second, when Ruusbroec writes that this contemplation is "above and beyond reason and distinction" we should not interpret this in terms of mystical swoons or altered states of consciousness. What he means, rather, is that contemplation only occurs through the eyes of faith.[40] Faith predisposes us to approach (or: "to go out" towards) God and world with a distinctively receptive, and also loving, disposition.

Thirdly, the vision of God is a vision "in a mirror," an indirect vision of God in the soul itself, in the deified mind which is the image of God. It is through the mediation of our own ground and origin that we encounter the divine ("the bosom of the Father").[41] When comparing contemplation in this life to the beatific vision, Ruusbroec explicitly makes this point, quoting 1 Corinthians 13:12: "The state of the saints is transparent and glorious and they receive that brightness

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[39] *Brulocht*, c. 158–86; translation by Wiseman, pp. 149–150. Ruusbroec's mysticism of light seems reminiscent of the Orthodox tradition. There are undoubtedly some interesting similarities with some major Eastern authors, including his contemporary Gregory Palamas (e.g., synergeia, distinction between divine essence (*wesen*) and operations or energies (*werken*), light mysticism…Ruusbroec's approach, however, seems more interiorizing. For instance, when he discusses the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor—a key passage in Eastern spirituality of light—he interprets Mt. Tabor allegorically as "the mountain of our bare mind." See *Vanden Blinkenden Steen*, 838ff. A more direct source for Ruusbroec's mysticism of light may have been Augustine, Bk XII of *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, especially XII, 31 & 59. For a translation, see E. Hill, St Augustine. *On Genesis* (NY, 2002), p. 499. Other "Eastern" elements, such as the idea of *synergeia*, may have been derived from John Cassian.

[40] In innumerable places throughout his writings Ruusbroec links "beyond reason" with faith. See for instance: "If we are to taste God or feel the life eternal in ourselves, we must go into God with our faith, above reason (*boven redene met onsen ghelove in gode gaen*). See *Vanden Blinkenden Steen*, 529–30 and *Boecsken der Verclaringhe*, 517–19: "For though reason and all corporeal feeling must yield to and make way for faith (*wiken moeten den ghelove*) and inward gazing of the spirit and those things that are above reason *(die boven redene sijn*), reason nevertheless remains without action in potentiality…" Similarly, in *Spieghel der Eeuwigher Salicheit*, 2035–37 we find: "If we want to behold eternal life and find it in us, then through love and faith (*overmids mine ende ghelooeve*) we must transcend ourselves beyond reason (*boven redene*) to our onefold eye."

[41] This too is the Eastern view according to Tomas Spidlík, *The Spirituality of the Christian East* (Kalamazoo, 1986), p. 338.

unmediated (*onghemiddelt*). Our state, on the other hand, is still mortal and coarse and this is the means (*middel*) which creates the shadow that overshadows our understanding so that we cannot know God or the things of heaven as clearly as the saints can, for as long as we walk in the shadow [of our mortal life] we cannot see the sun itself. 'But our knowledge is in likenesses and in hidden things,' says St. Paul."[42]

As the human soul mirrors the Trinity it does not merely participate in the generation of the Son but also in the procession of the Holy Spirit or Love. The soul actively loves and enjoys "the rich embrace of the essential Unity" through a sharing in the Spirit who is the unifying bond of Love between Father and Son.[43] This is the fourth part of Matthew 25:6, the loving meeting of the soul with the divine essence—"the abyss of namelessness,"[44] "the fathomless whirlpool of simplicity,"[45] "the dark stillness in which all the loving are lost."[46]

For Ruusbroec contemplation is a foretaste of heavenly life, and the foundation of all holiness.[47] It in-forms or shapes our interiority and charitable activity. Rather than understanding contemplation merely as a free-standing, transient vision of the divine—a subject-object experience—we should interpret it as occurring on a transcendental level (to borrow a key concept from Rahner).[48] Thus contemplation is not an experience besides our other experiences but it is a *disposition*, a way of looking and loving, which is the result of the *transformation* of our created being through faith and love (or better: the *uncovering*, if you like, of the uncreated and eternal foundation of our created being). This contemplative gaze and love then in-form our whole life and the way we approach God and his creation.

Understanding contemplation in these terms helps us to see how contemplation does not compete with practices of virtue but is their foundation. What is more, contemplation is not the ultimate spiritual ideal for Ruusbroec. That ideal is what he calls the common life,

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[42] *Vanden Blinkenden Steen*, 758–65. The theme of the soul as the medium through which we contemplate God is especially developed in his book *Een Spieghel der Eeuwigher Salicheit* (*A Mirror of Eternal Blessedness*).

[43] See *Brulocht*, c. 240–42 and c. 211–21.

[44] *Brulocht*, c. 242.

[45] *Brulocht*, c. 247.

[46] *Brulocht*, c. 253.

[47] *Brulocht*, c. 194 and 25.

[48] B. Fraling, *Der Mensch vor dem Geheimnis Gottes: Untersuchingen zur geistlichen Lehre des Jan van Ruusbroec* (Würzburg, 1967) has developed links between Rahner's transcendental approach and Ruusbroec's mysticism.

a life which harmoniously integrates contemplation and charitable activity.[49]

The Common Life and the Critique of Quietism

This is how Ruusbroec describes the common life, which, again, reflects the activity (in the processions) and the rest or fruition of the Trinity in the image of which we have been made.

> God's Spirit breathes us out to love and perform virtuous works, and he draws us back into him to rest and enjoy: this is an eternal life, just like in our bodily life we breathe air in and out . . . to go in, in idle enjoyment, and to go out with works, and always remaining united with God's Spirit: this is what I mean. Just like we open and close our bodily eyes, so quick that we do not feel it, likewise we die in God and live from God, and remain constantly one with God. Thus we will go out into our ordinary life and go in with love and cleave to God, and always remain united with God in stillness.[50]

Thus, Ruusbroec's ideal does involve a moment of "rest" or "fruition" (*ghebruken*, as Ruusbroec has it in Middle Dutch) but this fruition differs radically from the natural "rest" of those who pursue "the natural way." In order to understand how they differ, I must recall the traditional meaning of *fruitio*. Augustine had drawn a distinction between "enjoying God" and "using things." He defines "enjoyment" as "clinging to something lovingly for its own sake." All else should be "used," that is, subordinated to that ultimate goal. When he states that only God should be enjoyed, Augustine thus means that only God should be our ultimate concern; all other things should be subject to this ultimate end, and we should refrain from turning them into idols (which is what we do when we "enjoy"—in the Augustinian sense—a creaturely thing).[51] In short,

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[49] H. U. von Balthasar translates the notion of the common life (*ghemeyne leven*) as the "universal" or catholic life in his Glory of the Lord.

[50] *Vanden VII Trappen*, p. 269 from: *Jan van Ruusbroec, Werken*, Vol. III, ed. L. Reypens and M. Schurmans (Tielt, 1948).

[51] In other words, we should never act or love without reference to God. In *On Christian Doctrine* I, 4 [*De Doctrina Christiana*, translated by E. Hill as *Teaching Christianity* (New York, 1996)] Augustine gives a helpful example of somebody who wants to return to his homeland. In order to attain this goal, all else will have to be seen in relation to it, and should not become an end in itself—for that would be a harmful distraction.): "Supposing then we were exiles in a foreign land, and could only live happily in our own country, and that being unhappy in exile we longed to put an end to our unhappiness and to return to our own country, we would of course need land

"enjoying God" refers to taking God as our ultimate concern, as the sole genuine focus of our lives and attachments. It is in this sense too that Ruusbroec's employment of the term should be understood.[52]

If this is a correct reading of fruition we can begin to comprehend Ruusbroec's ideal of the common life: it is a life of both charitable activity and contemplation or fruition of God in perfect harmony with one another:

> Every lover is one with God and at rest, and God-like in the activity of love; for God, in his sublime nature of which we bear a likeness, dwells with enjoyment in eternal rest, with respect to the essential oneness, and with working, in eternal activity, with respect to the threeness; and each is the perfection of the other, for rest resides in oneness, and activity rests in threeness. And thus both remain for eternity.[53]

Understanding "enjoying God" or "resting in God" in the light of the Augustinian tradition helps us understand that this fruition does not refer to a transient, quietist experience of union with the divine but refers to a way of relating to God, world and self—a way that is free from every stain of self-centeredness and possessiveness. It also further reinforces my claim that contemplation for Ruusbroec refers to a disposition rather than to a practice of imageless meditation.[54]

Therefore, whereas his opponents pursue an experiential emptiness and inactivity in which the human faculties become passive and quiet, Ruusbroec wants us to attain a different kind of emptiness: we have

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vehicles or sea-going vessels, which we would have to make use of in order to be able to reach our own country, where we would find true enjoyment. And then suppose we were delighted with the pleasures of the journey, and with the very experience of being conveyed in carriages and ships, and that we were converted to enjoying what we ought to have been using, and were unwilling to finish the journey quickly, and that by being perversely captivated by such agreeable experiences we lost interest in our own country, where alone we could find real happiness in its agreeable familiarity. Well, that's how it is in this mortal life in which we are exiles away from the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6); if we wish to return to our home country, where alone we can be truly happy, we have to use this world, not enjoy it, so that we may behold the invisible things of God, brought to our knowledge through the things that have been made (Romans 1:20); that is, so that we may proceed from temporal and bodily things to grasp those that are eternal and spiritual."

[52] *Jan van Ruusbroec, Mystical Theologian*, 65ff. This is why Ruusbroec puts so much emphasis upon what he calls "a proper intention" (*meyninghe*): God alone should be the object of our ultimate concern.

[53] *Brulocht*, b. 1996–2002.

[54] For how could this kind of fleeting imageless meditation—which is a modern understanding of contemplation, namely as "contemplative prayer"—be *simultaneously* combined with engaging in practices of virtue?

to become empty of disorderly attachments to creatures.[55] Similarly, while Ruusbroec wants the mind to become free of worldly images (*ongebeeldet*)—that is: to become free from creaturely attachments and distractions—his opponents interpret it in experiential terms as if our mind should become vacuous and idle.[56] Finally, when Ruusbroec writes that our will should die he again aims to make clear that we should relate to God and world without possessiveness; but he does not mean to suggest that we should not want anything. Ruusbroec is clear on the issue: "Without our own activity, love and knowledge of God, we cannot be blessed."[57]

Thus, people who engage in quietist meditation do not engage in either an active life of virtue, nor do they engage in contemplation as Ruusbroec understands it. As he puts it in his last work, *Vanden XII Beghinen* (*The Twelve Beguines*):

> We find several wrong and misled people, who have neither a contemplative nor an active life. Nevertheless, they consider that they are the wisest and the holiest in the whole world. These are the ones who are freed of images of all things (*die onverbeelt zyn van allen dinghen*) and who, in bare nature, without grace and without virtue, turn inwards above reason in their own being; there they find inactivity, rest, and imageless bareness. That is the highest point to which nature, without grace and without virtue, can come. But since they are not baptized in the Spirit of our Lord and in true charity, they can neither see God nor find him or his glorious realm in their being. But they find their own essence: an imageless and becalmed inactivity (*ledicheit*); and there they imagine that they are eternally blessed.[58]

[55] Ruusbroec has described this in a brilliant manner in a famous passage from *Vanden Blinkenden Steen* (265–476) in which he sketches the evolution from self-centeredness to annihilation of selfhood through the metaphors of servants, friends and sons (imagery inspired by John Cassian). See *Jan van Ruusbroec, Mystical Theologian*, 67–70 for a more in-depth discussion.

[56] Ruusbroec makes this point very well in his first *Letter* written to Margareta van Meerbeke. See *Jan van Ruusbroec, Mystical Theologian*, 172ff.

[57] *Brulocht*, b. 2535–46.

[58] *Beghinen*, 2a 27–38 from *Opera Omnia VIIA, Vanden XII Beghinen*, ed. in chief, G. de Baere (Turnhout, 2000).

Concluding Observations

Ruusbroec was writing at a time when traditional "mystical theology" was being gradually replaced by a more experiential understanding of mysticism—a mysticism that had lost its ties with the world of theology, the sacraments, and the life of the church in general. Whereas his opponents interpret becoming free of images in terms of a psychological state in which the mind becomes vacant and inactive (*ledich*), Ruusbroec wants to convey that the mind should refrain from losing itself in creaturely distractions and be focused on God solely (which, of course, does not imply indifference towards creatures but rather a more mature, less possessive way of relating to them). Similarly, when Ruusbroec calls for annihilation of our will he does not want us to pursue a state in which our will dwells in stillness and passivity but he wants us to renounce our own will, our self-centeredness.

In my view an engagement with Ruusbroec's oeuvre has proved relevant for a number of reasons: he is one of the first to chronicle and criticize a subjectivist pursuit of mystical experiences, and it seems clear that our present-day understanding of mysticism finds its roots in this period. Confronting Ruusbroec's critique and reservations will make us aware of the radically different nature of patristic and medieval mystical theology from later, more modern understandings of mysticism. Whereas the former aimed at a transformation of the human person by modeling one's life on that of Christ or God as Trinity through a participation in the life of the Church, the latter was more concerned with pursuing mystical experiences in a somewhat individualistic manner by engaging in quietist practices of meditation. Also, Ruusbroec draws on his highly original and dynamic theology of the Trinity to both propound his own ideal of the common life (a life in which contemplation of God is in perfect harmony with an active life of charity) and to criticize quietist meditation. This is perhaps his major achievement: the way he applies his sophisticated theology of the Trinity, making it relevant for the everyday spirituality of ordinary Christians.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE: THE BOOK OF HOURS[1]

Roger S. Wieck

Introduction

For three hundred years the Book of Hours was the bestseller of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. From the mid-thirteenth to the mid-sixteenth century, more Books of Hours were commissioned and produced, bought and sold, bequeathed and inherited, printed and reprinted than any other text, including the Bible.

The main reason for this popularity lies in the book's contents. The Book of Hours is a prayer book that contains, as its heart, the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that is, the Hours of the Virgin. (For this reason the Latin term for the book is *Horae*, Hours). The Hours of the Virgin are a sequence of prayers to the Mother of God that, ideally, were recited throughout the course of the day, Hour by Hour. Other prayers usually found in the *Horae* helped round out the spiritual needs of late medieval and Renaissance men and women. The Penitential Psalms, for example, were recited to help one resist the Seven Deadly Sins. The Office of the Dead was prayed to reduce the time spent by one's friends and relatives in purgatory.

The Book of Hours played a key role in the late medieval and Renaissance cult of the Virgin. Marian devotion placed the Mother of God in the pivotal role as intercessor between man and God. As our spiritual mother, Mary would hear our petitions, take mercy on our plight, and plead our case to her Son who, surely, could not deny his own mother anything. In a Europe dominated by cathedrals dedicated to Notre Dame, the Hours of the Virgin were deemed Our Lady's favorite prayers, the quickest way to her heart.

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[1] This essay originally appeared in *The Liturgy of the Medieval Church*, Thomas J. Heffernan and E. Ann Matter, eds., Kalamazoo, 2001 (2005, revised second edition). In the present volume, the bibliography has been updated and the illustrations are expanded.

The Hours of the Virgin are at least as old as the ninth century; they may have been developed by Benedict of Aniane (c. 750–821) as part of a monastic movement that could not pray often enough. To the Divine Office, the daily (including nightly) round of prayers the medieval Church required of her ordained (priests, monks, and nuns), were added the Hours of the Virgin. By the mid-eleventh century, they were an established Church practice. By the late twelfth century, the Hours were also found in Psalters, the prayer books containing all 150 Psalms, a Calendar, and among other prayers, usually the Litany and the Office of the Dead. By the early thirteenth century, an era of increased literacy, both Psalters and the combined Psalter-Hours were used by not only the clergy, but also the laity. By the mid-thirteenth century, however, laypeople began commissioning their prayer books *without* the cumbersome Psalter, but with the other parts, such as the Calendar, Hours of the Virgin, Litany, and Office of the Dead, intact. Thus, the Book of Hours as we know it was born. By the late fourteenth century, the typical Book of Hours consisted of a Calendar, Gospel Lessons, Hours of the Virgin, Hours of the Cross, Hours of the Holy Spirit, the two Marian prayers called the "Obsecro te" and the "O intemerata," the Penitential Psalms and Litany, the Office of the Dead, and a group of about a dozen Suffrages; any number of accessory prayers complemented these essential texts.

Books of Hours were easy, even enjoyable, to use. The core text, the Hours of the Virgin, remained basically the same every day. The only variable was the three Psalms that constitute the nocturn of the first Hour, Matins. (The three Psalms changed depending on the day of the week: Psalms 8, 18, and 23 are read on Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays; Psalms 44, 45, and 86 on Tuesdays and Fridays; and Psalms 95, 96, and 97 on Wednesdays and Saturdays; in addition, some *Horae* contain minor textual variations for the Advent and Christmas seasons, but this is more the exception than the rule.) The contents of the remaining Hours, Lauds through Compline, did not change at all. And the other parts of the typical Book of Hours were also unchanging: Gospel Lessons, Hours of the Cross and of the Holy Spirit, Penitential Psalms, and so forth. One was certainly encouraged to pray the Hours of the Virgin (and, time permitting, the Hours of the Cross and of the Holy Spirit) and the Office of the Dead on a daily basis. The other common texts offered variation, as did the numerous accessory prayers that owners freely included in their *Horae*.

A Book of Hours printed in 1538 in Rouen for English export by Nicholas le Roux for François Regnault contains an introductory section called "The Preface and the Manner to Live Well" (spelling modernized). Its instructions reveal how a Book of Hours was used:

> First rise up at six of the clock in the morning in all seasons and in your rising do as follows. Thank Our Lord of rest that he gave you that night, commend you to God, Blessed Lady Saint Mary, and to that saint which is feasted that day…When you have arrayed yourself in your chamber or lodging, [say] Matins, Prime, and Hours if you may. Then go to the church…, and abide in the church the space of a low mass, while there you shall think and thank God for his benefits…When you are come from the church, take heed to your household or occupation till dinner time…Then take your refection or meal reasonably, without excess or over much…Rest you after dinner an hour or half an hour as you think best…As touching your service, say unto Terce before dinner, and make an end of all before supper. And when you may, say Dirige [Office of the Dead] and Commendations for all Christian souls, at the least way on the Holy Days and, if you have leisure, say them on other days, at the least with three lessons…(Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, PML 19585, fols. C6r–C8r).

Until around 1400, Books of Hours were entirely in Latin. Around this time, some French appeared in *Horae* made in France, but it was not a significant amount (Calendars, some rubrics, and a few accessory prayers might be in the vernacular). The same can be said about the extent of English in Books of Hours made in England or made for use there. The only major role played by a vernacular language in *Horae* history is with Dutch manuscripts. Geert Grote (d. 1384) translated the standard *Horae* texts into Dutch as part of the *Devotio moderna*, the late medieval reforming movement that encouraged pious reading in the vernacular. This translation achieved great success, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Books of Hours produced in the northern Netherlands were almost always in Dutch. Disregarding this latter phenomenon, however, Books of Hours are books of Latin. How much did the lay reader understand? Probably more than we might initially think. Speakers of French and Italian, of course, had an easy ear for the language. Plus, the great armature for the Book of Hours is Psalms. A total of thirty-seven Psalms form the Hours of the Virgin; these did not change, nor did the seven of the Penitential Psalms or the twenty-two in the Office of the Dead. Other biblical excerpts—the Gospel Lessons, the Passion according to John, and the readings from

the Book of Job (in the Office of the Dead)—would become equally familiar over time. Much of the remaining Latin is in rhymed verse, such as the "Stabat Mater" and "Salve sancta facies," or as with the Suffrages, it is rather simple "Church" Latin.

Most literate people had some working knowledge of Latin, and they knew basic prayers—"Ave Maria" (Hail Mary), "Pater noster" (Our Father), "Credo" (Apostles' Creed), and "Confiteor" ("I confess to Almighty God…")—by heart. As children they learned to read from Books of Hours. In England, Books of Hours were called "primers," a term that eventually came to mean the book from which a child first learned to read and pray; the word derives from the Hour of Prime.

Another reason Books of Hours were so popular was because of the people who used them: the laity. In a kind of bibliophilic jealousy, laypeople during this period sought for themselves a book that paralleled the use and function of the Breviary, the book containing the Divine Office that the clergy prayed from daily. In an age when rood screens blocked all but the most fleeting views of the Mass, when squints were pierced into walls in an effort to offer some glimpse of the elevated Eucharist, when, in other words, the laity's access to God was very much controlled and limited by others than themselves, Books of Hours bestowed direct, democratic, and potentially uninterrupted access to God, the Virgin Mary, and the saints.

How people felt about their Books of Hours is reflected in the varied marks of ownership—sometimes proud, sometimes personal—that they had painted on their pages. Portraits abound. Other marks of ownership include coats of arms, initials and monograms, mottoes, and personal emblems. These elements are used singly or in all combinations imaginable (figs. 1, 2).

In the course of their three-hundred-year history, Books of Hours offer case studies covering all the possibilities of how men and women of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance acquired their books. People commissioned them, received them as gifts (brides especially), inherited them, bought them new or secondhand from booksellers, borrowed them, sometimes made them themselves, and indeed even stole them. The range in their quality—from a specially illuminated manuscript with hundreds of pictures to a poor man's unillustrated *Horae* printed on paper—speaks not only of deep or shallow pockets but also of a vast audience with a shared mind-set. By the late fifteenth century, when

printing opened *Horae* ownership to a whole new category of customers, nearly any literate soul, even on the slimmest income, could buy one.

A great part—really the greater part—of this lay audience was female, and women played a key role in the patronage of Books of Hours throughout their entire history. In the first hundred and fifty years, this patronage was essential, and it was due to women that the genre flowered. Women, it was thought by their male clerical advisers, needed the pictures to help them in their piety. The images were, literally, visual aids.

This, finally, leads one to consider the pictures, for therein, too, lies much significance for the continual popularity and success of Books of Hours. As well liked now via Christmas cards as they were then, the pictures in any Book of Hours were often the only form of art possessed by its owner. Even to the wealthy, who could commission paintings and tapestries for their castle or chapel walls, miniatures in Books of Hours were a continuous source of aesthetic pleasure. One did not *need* more than one Book of Hours, but those who could afford to sometimes owned several.

The pictures in Books of Hours, whether manuscript or printed, were, of course, versions of subjects people saw at church. The main text, the Hours of the Virgin, was marked by a series of pictures illustrating either Christ's Infancy or his Passion. The events relating Christ's birth or his death were the same to be seen in the multiple panels of an altarpiece. A Book of Hours mirrored the high points of the Church's liturgical year in pictorial form. Suffrages were illustrated by images of saints who were also seen at church. Books of Hours linked church and home. The entire celestial court, God and his cosmos, could be held within the palms of one's hands and taken home. Used at there, the Book of Hours transformed one's chamber into a chapel.

In addition to aesthetic pleasure, these pictures had two additional functions. On a practical level, they indicated where the major texts began: they were bookmarks (Books of Hours, manuscript or printed, were originally neither foliated nor paginated). Second, as they marked certain texts, they also embodied them. They provided the themes upon which to meditate.

The usual themes for the standard texts of the Book of Hours can be summarized thus:

Text	*Image*
Calendar	Labors
	Zodiac
Gospel Lessons	John on Patmos
	Luke
	Matthew
	Mark
Hours of the Virgin	
Infancy cycle	
Matins	Annunciation
Lauds	Visitation
Prime	Nativity
Terce	Annunciation to the Shepherds
Sext	Adoration of the Magi
None	Presentation
Vespers	Flight into Egypt
	or Massacre of the Innocents
Compline	Coronation of the Virgin
Passion cycle	
Matins	Agony
Lauds	Betrayal
Prime	Christ before Pilate
Terce	Flagellation
Sext	Christ Carrying the Cross
None	Crucifixion
Vespers	Deposition
Compline	Entombment
Hours of the Cross	Crucifixion
Hours of the Holy Spirit	Pentecost
"Obsecro te"	Virgin and Child
"O intemerata"	Lamentation
Penitential Psalms	David in Penance
	or Bathsheba at Her Bath
	or Christ Enthroned
	or Last Judgment
Office of the Dead	Praying the Office of the Dead
	or Burial
	or Last Judgment
	or Job on the Dungheap
	or Raising of Lazarus
	or Lazarus and Dives
	or Death Personified
	or Three Living and Three Dead

The history of Books of Hours is also the history of late medieval and Renaissance manuscript illumination. This history includes such illustrious artists who worked on both panel and vellum: from the fourteenth century, for example, one thinks of the Master of the Parement de Narbonne (probably Jean d'Orléans) and, from the fifteenth century, Jan van Eyck, Bartélemy van Eyck (related by art but not blood), Simon Marmion, and the three famous Jeans—Fouquet, Poyer, and Bourdichon. French artists who specialized in illumination and who are famous for their pictures in Books of Hours include the Boucicaut Master and his followers (such as the Master of the Harvard Hannibal), the Bedford Master, Jean Colombe, and Maître François. Flemish illuminators include the Master of Guillebert de Mets, the Master of the Ghent Privileges, the Masters of the Gold Scrolls, Willem Vrelant, the Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, Simon Bening, and the Master of Charles V. The greatest of all Dutch manuscripts is a Book of Hours, painted by the eponymous Master of the Hours of Catherine of Cleves. And when Giulio Clovio completed the Farnese Hours in 1546, after nine years of work, the result was a manuscript that so dazzled Vasari that the author felt compelled to describe all of its miniatures in the second edition of his *Lives of the Painters*; Vasari called the manuscript one of the "marvels of Rome."

When Books of Hours came to be printed, beginning in the 1480s, their pictures ensured their meteoric success. Between 1480 and 1600 there were some 1,775 different *Horae* editions printed. This success was due in part to the cycles of border vignettes with which the printers embellished their products. This was a selling point, and they knew it; printers often boasted about the pictures on their title pages. As the following selective list indicates, the cycles' range of subjects (in addition to the standard ones given above in the chart) is quite extraordinary: lives of Christ and the Virgin, saints and evangelists, the Dance of Death, the trials of Job, children's games, heroines, sibyls, the Fifteen Signs of the Second Coming, the story of Joseph, the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Virtues, the Seven Vices, the Triumphs of Caesar, the story of Tobias, the Miracles of Our Lady, the story of Judith, the Destruction of Jerusalem, and, finally, the Apocalypse.

Books of Hours are one of the most instructive vehicles for understanding the relationship of liturgy to everyday men and women of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Ironically, the collection of prayers represented by the typical Book of Hours was never officially sanctioned nor controlled by the Church herself. This irony means,

however, that the texts and their accompanying pictures are a true, uncensored, mirror of how the Church's liturgy was perceived and practiced by the unordained masses.

Calendar

Calendars, at the front of all Books of Hours, had the same function in the Middle Ages as calendars today: they tell one what day it is. They do this, however, not by enumerating the days of the month, but by citing the feast that was celebrated on that particular day. Today, when we speak of St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, or Halloween, we know we are referring to February 14, March 17, and October 31. This is the medieval way of telling time.

The feasts listed in Calendars are mostly saints' days, that is, commemorations of those particular days on which, tradition customarily has it, the saints were martyred (their "birthdays" into heaven). Other feasts commemorate important events in the lives of Christ and the Virgin. In addition to Christmas Eve and Christmas, Calendars celebrate Christ's Circumcision (January 1) and the Epiphany (January 6). The Virgin's feasts include her Conception (December 8) and Birth (September 8), the Annunciation (March 25) and Visitation (July 2), her Purification in the Temple (February 2; as in fig. 3), and her Assumption into Heaven (August 15). No Calendars include the events of Christ's Passion, his Resurrection, or his Ascension, nor Pentecost. These were movable feasts whose dates depend upon that of Easter, the celebration of which changed every year. Thus, Calendars in Books of Hours (like those in the Church's official liturgical service books) are perpetual calendars since they can be used from one year to the next.

Some feasts are more important than others, and their relative importance, or grading, is indicated. Most feasts are in black ink, whereas the more important ones appear in red (hence our term *red-letter* day, meaning a major event; in figure 3, for example, the Feast of St. Ignatius on February 1 is in black while the Purification on the 2nd is in red). Some Calendars have triple gradations, with the most important holy days in gold, the less solemn in red, and the least in black. These genuinely triple-graded Calendars are not to be confused with those deluxe ones from around 1400 whose highly decorative layouts simply alternate their feasts in red and blue, but with the more important ones in gold.

Many Calendars from the thirteenth to the early fifteenth centuries include a number of blank spaces (as in figs. 3, 4). These represent the ferial days, that is, days within the middle of the week on which the feast of a saint was not celebrated. Liturgically this meant that the Mass for that particular day related to the season (from January 2 to 5, for example, the Mass of the Circumcision was said on ferial days). Calendars of the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, on the other hand, tend to be composites, with a saint's feast supplied for every day. While visually appealing, to the medieval eye, such Calendars were of little practical use.

While most of the feasts mentioned so far have been universal (celebrated by the Church as a whole), Calendars in Books of Hours, like those in Missals or Breviaries, also include feasts of a more local interest. These help determine the Calendar's "use," that is, the place where the manuscript was intended to be prayed. Local festivals can indicate the country, region, city, parish, or in a few rare instances, the particular church in which a Book of Hours was to be used. Paris Calendars, for example, always highlight the feasts of Sts. Geneviève, patroness of the city (January 3), and Denis, patron saint of France, whose place of martyrdom, Montmartre, is named after that occurrence (September 9). Calendars for Reims list Sts. Gervasius (June 19), Martialis (July 3), and the sixth-century bishop of the city, Romanus (October 23), as red-letter days. A feast celebrating the transfer (or sometimes theft) of a saint's relics from one site to another (called a translation) is also a good indicator for local use. Rouen Calendars celebrate the translations of Sts. Audoenus, to whom a magnificent fourteenth-century church is dedicated (May 5), Eligius (May 25), and a general feast of all the city's translations (December 3).

The use of a Calendar can be helpful (but one must be careful) in determining where the Book of Hours was actually made. Paris Calendars almost always mean "made in Paris" since, with its productive workshops, the French capital had no need to import manuscripts made elsewhere. Most Dutch Books of Hours, too, were made locally. But many *Horae* with English Calendars were manufactured in Flanders or France, both of which exported many manuscripts to that country. Books of Hours with Spanish Calendars, too, were often made in Belgium. The situation continued with printed *Horae* but is less confusing since their colophons or title pages often give, in addition to the manuscript's use, the name and city of the printer.

In addition to feast days, *Horae* Calendars contain other information. At the far left in most is a column of Roman numerals running from *i* to *xix* (the series is not consecutive, however, and there are gaps). These are the Golden Numbers, which indicate the appearances of new moons and, counting ahead fourteen days, full moons throughout the year. Adjacent to the Golden Numbers are repeating series of letters running *A* through *G*. These are the Dominical Letters, so called because they help one find Sundays (and, of course, all the other days of the week) throughout the year. Each year this Sunday Letter changed, moving backward. In leap years it changed a second time (on February 25); thus, feasts that in a common year had been on the previous day, now "leaped" to two days apart.

This esoteric information was important to medieval Christians. With it they could determine the date of Easter, the Church's most important feast, in any given year. Easter was celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon that falls on or after the vernal equinox (the spring day when day and night are the same length); should the full moon occur on a Sunday, Easter is then pushed to the following Sunday. The varying occurrence, from one year to the next, of that first full moon and the occasional pushed Sunday account for the widely disparate dates for medieval (and modern) Easters.

Finally, many Calendars, especially those from the thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century, include the ancient Roman calendrical system. In this most confusing of all systems, each month had but three fixed points: Kalends (always the first day of the month and whence we derive our term calendar), Ides (the middle of the month, either the thirteenth or fifteenth), and Nones (the ninth day before the Ides, counting inclusively; it fell on the fifth or seventh of the month). All the days in between were counted backward from these three fixed points. Thus St. Valentine's Day was not February 14 according to Roman time, but *xvi Kalends Martii*, or the sixteenth day before the Kalends of March (fig. 3).

Medieval time was Roman time. It followed the reformed but still imperfect system instituted by Julius Caesar. By the thirteenth century, it was noticeably out of sync with reality, and by the late Middle Ages, full moons were not appearing until ten days after the Calendars said they were supposed to. Easter was moving on into summer. Pope Gregory XIII (papacy, 1572–85) reformed the Julian calendar and, adding ten days (October 4 in 1582 was followed by October 15) and other fine tunings, instituted in 1583 the Gregorian calendar we still use today.

When illustrated—which is only about half the time—Calendars contain representations of the signs of the zodiac and labors of the months. While the Calendar miniatures of the *Très Riches Heures* of Jean, duc de Berry, are among the most famous of all illuminations, they are also something of a freak, for Calendar illustrations are normally small or half-page miniatures or marginal vignettes. The traditional assignment to the months of the zodiacal signs and the labors (and a few leisures), which follow the rural peasant activities dictated by seasons, are:

Month	*Zodiac*	*Labor*
January	Aquarius (Water Carrier)	Feasting
February	Pisces (Fish)	Keeping Warm
March	Aries (Ram)	Pruning
April	Taurus (Bull)	Picking Flowers
May	Gemini (Twins)	Hawking
June	Cancer (Crab)	Mowing
July	Leo (Lion)	Reaping
August	Virgo (Virgin)	Threshing
September	Libra (Balance)	Treading Grapes
October	Scorpio (Scorpion)	Sowing
November	Sagittarius (Archer)	Thrashing for Acorns
December	Capricorn (Goat)	Slaughtering a Pig

While Calendar illustrations were traditionally small (fig. 3), through the course of the fifteenth century artists and their patrons took an increasing interest in these secular elements, and they indeed begin to grow (fig. 4). Simon Bening (1483/84–1561), the last great Flemish illuminator, capitalized on the taste for large Calendar miniatures; he made them full-page (fig. 5). Ironically, Bening was stimulated by the freakish Book of Hours just mentioned, the *Très Riches Heures*, which the artist saw when it was in the library of Margaret of Austria in Malines.

Gospel Lessons

Following the Calendar the first text proper in a Book of Hours is a series of Gospel Lessons by the four evangelists. Although not always found in *Horae* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, by the fifteenth these Lessons had become a regular feature.

The first reading, from John (1:1–14), is a kind of preamble for the entire Book of Hours: "In principio erat Verbum…" (In the beginning

was the Word…). The Word of God, existing from eternity, becomes the revealer of the Father and the light of men. The text emphasizes the eternal generation of the Word, who is Christ, mankind's need of redemption, and God's willingness to provide it. The passage continues, alluding to the witness of John the Baptist, mankind's rejection of Christ, and Christians as the new children of God, and ends with the Incarnation. Luke's Lesson (1:26–38) describes the Annunciation: "Missus est Angelus Gabriel…" (The angel Gabriel was sent from God…). Gabriel addresses the Virgin, "Ave gratia plena…" (Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women), the salutation that would become the first part of the Hail Mary. Luke's account ends with the Virgin's acceptance of God's will. The reading from Matthew (2:1–12), after mentioning the birth of Christ, launches into the story of the Three Magi: "Cum natus esset Jesus…" (When Jesus was born…). The passage relates the Magi's interview before Herod, their worship of Christ, their gifts, and, finally, their return home. Mark's Lesson (16:14–20), "Recumbentibus undecim discipulis…" (Jesus appeared to the eleven as they were at table…), relates Christ's appearance to the apostles after the Resurrection, his command to preach salvation throughout the world, his granting miraculous powers to them, and, finally, his Ascension.

Except for Christ's Passion, these excerpts touch on the major events from the life of the Savior. Two of them, indeed, dwell especially on the Christmas story, those events from Christ's Infancy that were so dear to medieval people. These readings, however, were not arbitrarily chosen from the New Testament for insertion into *Horae*. They are the Gospel Lessons read at Mass on four of the Church's major feasts: Christmas Day, December 25 (John's reading is from the main Mass of the day); the Annunciation on March 25 (Luke); Epiphany, January 6 (Matthew); and the Ascension, a movable feast whose date depended upon that of Easter (Mark). Each Book of Hours thus contained, in a way, the essence of the Church's liturgical year, encapsulated in these four readings. Earlier the Book of Hours was described as a kind of lay Breviary; with these Gospel Lessons, the Book of Hours also steals a small but important group of texts from the Missal. The Lessons in a Book of Hours, however, are not arranged in *liturgical* order. Their sequence has been altered so that their composite narrative relates the events in their proper *chronological* order: God's divine plan (John); the Annunciation and Incarnation (Luke); Christ's Nativity and his mani-

festation to the world (Matthew); Christ's sending his apostles on their missionary way and his Ascension (Mark).

By the late Middle Ages, these particular passages had acquired a special, almost magical position in the lay mind. As Eamon Duffy has related, priests were hired to recite them as protection against harm or damage to one's house. In England they were sometimes read aloud during annual processions that blessed the parish in the hope of scattering demons and ensuring the fertility of the fields. John's Lesson, one of the most numinous texts of this period, was used at the blessing of bread at Sunday Mass and was the final Gospel recited by the priest at the end of each Mass. Pope Clement V (papacy, 1305–14) issued an indulgence of one year and forty days to those who, while listening to the last Gospel, kissed something—a book, a sacred object, or even their thumbnail—at the words, "Verbum caro factum est" (The Word was made flesh). Such osculation mirrored the reverential genuflection by the priest reading these words at the end of Mass. Inscribed on a strip of vellum and hung around the neck, this sacred text was thought to ward off evil; ailing cattle could be cured by this charm if dangled from their horns.

Christ's Passion was the one important part of the Savior's life not covered by the four Lessons. This *lacuna* was clearly felt by the owners of Books of Hours, with the result that the story of the Passion was often included in *Horae* in the form of an extra reading taken from John (18:1–19:42). This is the haunting eyewitness account by the one apostle who remained at the foot of the cross, along with Mary, during the Crucifixion. It was John's version of the Passion with which people were most familiar: this account was read or chanted on Good Friday. John's Passion, something of an optional text in manuscript *Horae*, became standard in printed editions. In the latter, it is almost always found right after the standard four Lessons.

In a tradition that can be traced back to classical antiquity via Carolingian Gospel Books, each of the four Gospel Lessons usually had a portrait of its author as a frontispiece. The evangelists are usually accompanied by their symbols: John's eagle, Luke's ox, Matthew's angel, and Mark's lion. John, whose text appears first, is normally shown on the isle of his exile, Patmos (fig. 6). The other three evangelists are usually shown as authors/scribes (fig. 7). Some *Horae*, instead of author portraits, depict scenes from the evangelists' lives. The most popular of these is John Boiled in Oil, the (ultimately unsuccessful) torture put to

him by Emperor Domitian. Luke is sometimes shown painting a portrait of the Virgin, which tradition has it he executed from life.

In addition to evangelist portraits and scenes from their lives, miniatures for the Gospel Lessons sometimes (albeit rarely) depict events described or alluded to in the texts themselves. A French Book of Hours illuminated around 1465 by the Master of Jacques de Luxembourg, for example, features the Last Supper for John, God Sending Forth the Christ Child to the Virgin Annunciate for Luke, the Journey of the Magi for Matthew (fig. 8), and the Ascension for Mark. John's Passion, the "fifth" Lesson, was often illustrated by one of the opening events of the Passion: Christ's Agony in the Garden, Betrayal, or the "Ego sum" (when Christ's response, "I am the one," to the soldiers who sought him made them fall to the ground in amazement).

Hours of the Virgin

Traditionally the Hours of the Virgin follow the Gospel Lessons. There are eight separate Hours: Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Each Hour consists mostly of Psalms, plus varying combinations of hymns, prayers, and lessons, to which innumerable short ejaculations (antiphons, versicles, and responses) are generously sprinkled. Mimicking canonical devotion, these eight Hours were ideally prayed throughout the course of the day: Matins and Lauds were said together at night or upon rising, Prime (first hour) around 6 A.M., Terce (third hour) at 9 A.M., Sext (sixth hour) around noon, None (ninth hour) at 3 P.M., Vespers (evensong) in early evening, and Compline before retiring.

Part of the attraction of the Hours of the Virgin for the laity is their constancy. The same basic Hours were prayed day in, day out. This sameness was clearly a comfort. Repeated on a daily basis from childhood to old age, the Hours of the Virgin became a familiar, steadfast friend. Variety could be had by adding, mixing, or substituting the Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit, or, indeed, any of the multiple ancillary prayers.

While the Psalms of the Old Testament form the core of the Hours of the Virgin, they do not, of course, mention the Virgin Mary. One of the great beauties of the Hours is how the Psalms are throughout given a second level of reading, a mystical interpretation. The theme of Psalm (Ps.) 8 (the first of the first nocturn) is the glory of God as shown in nature and in man:

> *Ps.* O Lord our Lord: how admirable is thy name in the whole earth! For thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens. Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise…What is man that thou art mindful of him?…Thou hast made him a little less than the angels…

Through the antiphons that begin and end, as a kind of frame, each Psalm, its themes are applied to the Mother of God. "Blessed art thou" is said before the Psalm; like a musical motif whose opening notes are enough to recall its entirety, the opening antiphon was only a short phrase. "Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" is the closing antiphon, said at the completion of Psalm 8. Thus, the theme of the Psalm, the glory of God made manifest in both nature and man, is expanded through the theme of the antiphons, the miracle of the Incarnation. Man is not only worthy of salvation, but this salvation is also brought about through the Virgin Mary, a member of the human race. The nocturn continues with Psalm 18:

> *Ps.* The heavens show forth the glory of God: and the firmament declareth the work of his hands…The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts: the commandment of the Lord is lightsome, enlightening the eyes…

The Psalm's theme is the splendor of the physical and moral orders of the universe. The short form of the antiphon recited at the beginning of the Psalm, "Even as choice myrrh," is expanded to its complete form at the end, "Even as choice myrrh, thou hast yielded an odor of sweetness, O holy Mother of God." The phrase compares Divine Wisdom to the choicest myrrh and, by extension, to the Virgin Mary. Psalm 23 is the third and last Psalm of the nocturn:

> *Ps.*…Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory.

After the conquest of the Promised Land, the Ark of the Covenant was kept in various places until David's accession; he transferred it to his capital, Jerusalem. Tradition holds that David wrote Psalm 23 to celebrate this joyous occasion; it praises the majesty of the Lord and his glorious entrance into his shrine. "Before the couch," the opening antiphon, is expanded to "Before the couch of this Virgin sing to us often sweet songs with solemnity," recited at the end. The antiphon exhorts us to sing praises before the Virgin who, receiving Christ at the Incarnation, is the new Ark of the Covenant.

After the three Psalms there follow the nocturn's three lessons whose teachings reiterate themes introduced by the Psalms and expanded by their antiphons. The three readings speak of Eternal Wisdom and its dwelling place on earth. Mystically interpreted, Eternal Wisdom is taken to be the Incarnate Christ. The Hours also apply these texts to the Virgin. Responses recited after the lessons, like the Psalms' antiphons, guide the reader in these interpretations.

Like Calendars, the Hours of the Virgin will be for a specific "use." Use is reflected in textual variations that go back to the ancient monastic traditions of different locals. The variations most easily detected are in the Hours of Prime and None, in particular, the *capitulum* (a short reading near the end of the Hour) and the antiphon immediately preceding it. Thus, for Rome use, Prime's capitulum is "Que est ista…" (Who is she…) and its antiphon "Assumpta est Maria…" (Mary is taken up…); None's capitulum is "In plateis…" (In the streets…) and its antiphon "Pulchra es…" (Thou art beautiful…).

Composed at least by the ninth century, the Hours of the Virgin had consoled the ordained for hundreds of years before they became the center of lay devotion in the mid-thirteenth century. By the mid-sixteenth century, the decline of the Hours of the Virgin began. The Council of Trent (1545–63), as evident in the Council's ensuing catechism, emphasized prayer directly to God. The manuscripts are no longer commissioned; the printed editions peter out. In 1568 Pope Pius V removed the general obligation on the part of the clergy to say the Hours of the Virgin as part of their Divine Office (although Breviaries, even till the twentieth century, continued to contain them). In the 1960s, the Second Vatican Council revised the Breviary, and, quashing a tradition extending back over a thousand years, entirely eliminated the Hours of the Virgin from the Church's new official prayer book, *The Liturgy of the Hours*. The Hours of the Virgin are no more.

In most *Horae* the Hours of the Virgin are illustrated by the awe-inspiring events in the Virgin's life surrounding the Infancy of Christ (see above chart): Annunciation (figs. 2, 9) through the Flight into Egypt. Many cycles end, however, with the Coronation of the Virgin, Mary's reward, in a way, for her role in God's plan. Accompanying or substituting for the traditional Infancy cycle is sometimes a series of illustrations of Christ's Passion (fig. 10). And then there are some Hours that begin with an Annunciation, but break into a Passion cycle at Lauds that continues through the rest of the Hours. Finally, some rare Hours of the Virgin are illustrated not with the Christian anti-

type but with the Old Testament or pagan type. The use of typology, popularized in the fifteenth century by the *Speculum humanae salvationis* and the *Biblia pauperum*, led to the frequent insertion of a picture of Augustus and the Tiburtine Sibyl (also called the Vision of the *Ara coeli*) at Lauds in printed *Horae*.

Hours of the Cross and Hours of the Holy Spirit

The Hours of the Cross and Hours of the Holy Spirit are much shorter than those of the Virgin. The canonical sequencing is the same, Matins through Compline, except there is no Lauds. These two additional Hours, one after the other, often follow the Hours of the Virgin. Sometimes, however, there occur in *Horae* what are called mixed Hours. In these cases, the individual Hours are integrated within the Hours of the Virgin. Thus, Matins of the Cross and Matins of the Holy Spirit are found right after Matins and Lauds of the Virgin, Prime of the Cross and Prime of the Holy Spirit after Prime of the Virgin, Terce of the Cross and Terce of the Holy Spirit after Terce of the Virgin, and so forth.

Each of the Hours of the Cross consists of two pairs of versicles and responses, a "Gloria Patri" followed by an antiphon, a short hymn followed by a versicle and a response, and a prayer; there are no Psalms. The structure and contents of each of the remaining Hours (Prime through Compline) is the same except for the hymn, which is, in each Hour, a different stanza from a devotional poem whose verses form meditations on sequential moments of Christ's Passion. Matins's hymn speaks of Christ's betrayal and arrest, Prime speaks of Christ before Pilate; Terce, Christ's crowning with thorns; Sext, the Crucifixion; None, Christ's death; Vespers, the Deposition; and Compline, the Entombment.

The Hours of the Holy Spirit follow the same structure as those of the Cross. The hymns of the Hours touch upon different themes relating to the attributes of the Holy Spirit or the role he played or will play in the history of mankind's redemption. Matins discusses the Incarnation; Prime, Redemption through Christ's Passion; Terce, Pentecost; Sext, the Apostles' proselytization; None, the qualities of the Holy Spirit; Vespers, the Holy Spirit as Protector; and Compline, the Last Judgment.

Sometimes the Hours of the Cross and those of the Holy Spirit are full Offices. As such, they are equal in length to and their structure

parallels the Hours of the Virgin: they include Lauds; all Hours contain Psalms; and Matins has lessons. These longer Offices appear in manuscripts less frequently than the shorter Hours, and in printed *Horae* they hardly appear at all.

The subject for the single miniature that traditionally marks the Hours of the Cross is a Crucifixion (fig. 11). When the Hours are the longer Office, they often have a miniature at each Hour (the iconography is akin to the Passion series for the Hours of the Virgin). The traditional miniature for the Hours of the Holy Spirit is a Pentecost (fig. 12). When these Hours are the longer Office, they might have a set of eight pictures whose themes relate to various manifestations of the Holy Spirit; these will always include a Baptism of Christ and Pentecost, and often scenes of Peter or Paul preaching or baptizing.

"Obsecro te" and "O intemerata"

Two special prayers to the Virgin appear in nearly all fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Books of Hours. They are known by their incipits (opening words): "Obsecro te" (I beseech you) and "O intemerata" (O immaculate Virgin). Written in the first person singular, the prayers address the Virgin directly in especially plaintive, urgent tones. They are among the most moving of all *Horae* prayers and encapsulate the essence of late medieval spirituality.

The "Obsecro te" has four main sections. It opens by addressing the Virgin, reciting a list of her qualities, especially those emphasizing her tenderness; the prayer then invokes Mary's help by reminding her of the joyful role she played in the Incarnation; it then moves on to the Virgin's sorrows and the role she played in Christ's Passion; and, finally, the prayer's petition for aid appears. The petition ends with its most moving request: "And at the end of my life show me your face, and reveal to me the day and hour of my death…"

The slightly shorter "O intemerata" has a similar tone and structure. It, however, asks both Mary and St. John, as witnesses to the Crucifixion and thus through their special relationship to the crucified Christ, to "be, at every hour and every moment of my life, inside and outside me, my steadfast guardians and pious intercessors before God…, for you can obtain whatever you ask from God without delay." This last phrase is crucial. The goal was to secure the aid of intercessors to plead his or her case before a God who was more just that merciful. The Virgin and St. John, with hearts more forgiving than a righteous

God's, would certainly pity the sinner. And surely God would not deny a petition from the only two people who did not fail him at the foot of the cross.

Since the first part of the "Obsecro te" emphasizes the Virgin's joy during Christ's Infancy, the prayer is frequently illustrated with a Virgin and Child, often entertained by musical angels (fig. 13). Since the prayer is in the first person singular, the miniature was also a popular place for owners to insert their portraits. Very often, a triangular series of glances illustrates the nature of the intercession. The patron looks to Mary, who then glances toward and caresses her son; Christ, encouraged by his mother, looks at the owner and bestows the sought-for blessing. Since the main theme of the "O intemerata" is the faithfulness of the Virgin and John at the Crucifixion, a Lamentation, the great low point in Mary and John's witness, often illustrates this prayer.

Penitential Psalms and Litany

The Seven Penitential Psalms usually follow the Hours of the Cross and the Hours of the Holy Spirit. Medieval tradition ascribed the authorship of these seven Psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, and 142) to King David, who composed them as penance for his grievous sins. These transgressions included adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Uriah. In another occurrence of sin, David offends God out of pride by commanding a census of Israel and Judah. As punishment, David is sent a choice of famine, war, or pestilence. After plague ravages Israel, David's penance appeases the avenging God.

These particular seven Psalms have a long history associated with atonement. It is thought that at least by the third century they had formed part of Jewish liturgy. In the Christian tradition, they were certainly known by the sixth century, when the Roman author and monk Cassiodorus referred to them as a sevenfold means of obtaining forgiveness. Pope Innocent III (papacy, 1198–1216) ordered their liturgical recitation during Lent. Since the number of these Psalms and the Deadly Sins was the same, the two became linked, and the Penitential Psalms were recited to ask for forgiveness for the dead. Like the Office of the Dead, the Psalms were thought especially efficacious in reducing the time the departed had to spend in purgatory. But the Psalms were also recited to benefit the living, as a means of avoiding these sins in the first place. These seven sins—pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and sloth—had the ability to land one in hell for all time. This is why they were called Deadly or Mortal.

The Penitential Psalms are always followed by the Litany. The Litany was a hypnotic enumeration of saints whom one asked to pray for us. The list begins with "Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison" (Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy), a shortened form of the nine-part "Kyrie" recited by the priest at the beginning of every Mass. Christ, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Trinity are then invoked. Following these preliminary petitions is the Litany proper. Each invocation to the saint is followed by "Ora (orate in the plural) pro nobis" (Pray for us):

> Holy Mother of God—pray for us.
> St. Michael—pray for us.
> St. Raphael—pray for us.
> All ye holy angels and archangels—pray for us.
> All ye holy orders of blessed spirits—pray for us.
> St. John the Baptist—pray for us.

The Virgin, as we see, heads the list, followed by archangels, angels, other celestial spirits, and John the Baptist (our future intercessor at the Last Judgment). Next come the apostles, male martyrs, confessors (male nonmartyr saints), female virgin martyrs, and, finally, widows.

The Litany continues with a series of petitions called the "Ab's" (*From*s), "Per's" (*Through*s), and "Ut's" (*That*s). For example:

> From lightning and tempest—O Lord, deliver us.
> From the scourge of earthquake—O Lord, deliver us…
> Through the mystery of thy holy Incarnation—O Lord, deliver us.
> Through thy coming—O Lord, deliver us…
> That thou render eternal blessings to our benefactors—We beseech thee, hear us.
> That thou vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of the earth—We beseech thee, hear us…

The most common subject for the single miniature marking the Penitential Psalms is the elderly David kneeling in prayer, seeking God's forgiveness (fig. 14). The king is usually shown isolated, alone in the landscape to which he withdrew in his penance. Often he kneels in a kind of valley or trench, a reference to the cave to which he retired or to the opening line of the sixth Penitential Psalm, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee." Fifteenth-century Italian *Horae* often show, instead of the elderly penitent king, the young David, triumphant after his victory over Goliath. Other *Horae*, especially late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century French, use an image not of the sinner, but of the

sin: Bathsheba at Her Bath. A picture of Judgment Day provided a continual reminder of the forthcoming reckoning, when good deeds will be weighed against sins, and an inducement to praying the Penitential Psalms as a means of warding off temptation. This subject, universally preferred for these Psalms in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century *Horae*, fell out of favor in much of Europe by the fifteenth (when images of David gained ground). The Last Judgment remained prevalent, however, in Dutch and Flemish Books of Hours. Although there are exceptions, Litanies in Books of Hours are hardly ever illustrated.

Accessory Texts

Books of Hours are like automobiles. While they consist of certain prayers without which they cannot properly function as nor be properly called Books of Hours, there was a nearly inexhaustible array of ancillary prayers that people, depending on their piety and their pocketbook, felt free to add. Medieval people personalized their prayer books the way modern people accessorize their cars (and for some of the same reasons).

One of the most frequently encountered accessory prayers is the Joys of the Virgin (fifteen is the usual number, although five, seven, and nine also appear); they celebrate the happy moments in Mary's life from the Annunciation to her Assumption into Heaven. There is also a group of prayers whose number of components is fixed at the same mystical, magical digit: Seven Requests to Our Lord, Seven Prayers of St. Gregory, Seven Verses of St. Bernard, and the Seven Last Words of Our Lord. Extra Hours (that is, in addition to those of the Virgin, Cross, and Holy Spirit) also appear. Favorites include the Hours of St. Catherine, the Hours of John the Baptist, and the Weekday Hours (Sunday Hours of the Trinity; Monday, of the Dead; Tuesday, of the Holy Spirit; and so forth). These ancillary Hours are usually short, structured like those of the Cross and the Holy Spirit.

Since Books of Hours were used in church as well as at home, many contained Masses, that is, the actual prayers recited by the priest at the altar or sung by the choir. These Masses usually contain those texts that changed from feast to feast: Introit, Collect, Epistle, and so forth. But often these Masses include some of the unchanging parts of the service: "Confiteor," "Kyrie," Apostles' Creed, "Sanctus," and so forth. The Saturday Mass of the Virgin is the most popular of all the Masses. Even more numerous than actual Masses in Books of Hours, however,

are the many quasi-liturgical prayers with such rubrics as, "Upon entering church," "When taking holy water," "At the Elevation," "After the Elevation," "Upon receiving Communion," and so forth. Of these, the most popular were prayers recited at the Elevation. The desire to see the host raised by the celebrant moments after its consecration was zealously felt in this period; in an era of infrequent (normally once a year) Communion, seeing the transubstantiated host was second only to receiving it.

Other popular prayers include the "Stabat Mater" (whose emotional intensity, rhythm, and rhymes make it quite memorable); the "Salve sancta facies" (a prayer to the holy face of Christ that was frequently accompanied by generous indulgences); and petitions to one's guardian angel.

Sometimes these accessory prayers get pictures, and sometimes they do not. The Joys of the Virgin usually get, as might be expected, a miniature of a Virgin and Child (fig. 15); the Requests to Our Lord, an image of Christ as Judge; the Prayers of St. Gregory, a Mass of St. Gregory; the Verses of St. Bernard, a St. Bernard in His Study; and the Last Words of Our Lord, a Crucifixion or Resurrection. Extra Hours, when illustrated, often have a miniature of the logical theme or saint. The Saturday Mass of the Virgin was often an excuse for yet another picture of the Virgin and Child. The "Stabat Mater" is usually marked with an image of the Pietà; the "Salve sancta facies" with a Vera Icon (fig. 16), and prayers to guardian angels with portraits of kneeling owners.

Suffrages

Saints were the protectors of medieval people, their helpers in childbirth, their guardians during travel, their nurse in toothache, their doctor in plague. If the Virgin was the person to whom one addressed the all-important petition for eternal salvation, it was from the saints that one sought more basic, or temporal, kinds of help. While Mary became, as the Mother of God, almost a goddess herself, saints always retained more of their humanity and thus their approachability. The saints whom medieval people saw painted onto altarpieces, stained into glass, sculpted from stone, woven in tapestries, and stitched upon liturgical vestments were the same saints whose special invocations were to be found in one's own Book of Hours. They could be taken home, held in the hand, called upon at any time.

A typical Book of Hours contained a dozen or so Suffrages. They usually appear at the end of the volume, but some *Horae* include them after Lauds of the Hours of the Virgin, in imitation of monastic practice. Their order (as with Litanies) reflects celestial hierarchy. God or the three Persons of the Trinity (who, of course, are not saints) always begin the Suffrages, followed by the Virgin, the archangel Michael, and John the Baptist (the last two prominently positioned because of their importance as judge and intercessor, respectively, at the Last Judgment). The apostles appear next, followed by male martyrs and confessors. Female saints come next, virgin martyrs first.

Each Suffrage is composed of four elements: three ejaculations—antiphon, versicle, response—followed by a longer prayer (*oratio*). The first three elements constitute a string of praises. As for the prayer, its first half recounts (albeit briefly) an episode from the saint's life or touches on some important aspect of the saint's holiness; the second half of the prayer is always a petition for aid from God through the saint's intercession. The mixture of these four elements mirrors the arrangement found in Breviaries and, indeed, many of the elements that compose a given Suffrage are quotations or extractions from the Divine Office. Some Suffrages, too, draw from Missals, quoting the prayer, which was particular for that Mass, that follows the "Gloria Patri." Since the prayers in both Breviaries and Missals change from feast to feast, their petitions to specific saints made them a logical quarry for the popular versions that appear in *Horae* as Suffrages. A translation of a typical Suffrage follows:

> *A.* Nicholas, friend of God, when invested with the episcopal insignia, showed himself a friend to all. *V.* Pray for us, O most blessed father Nicholas. *R.* That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. *Or.* O God, you adorned the pious blessed Bishop Nicholas with countless miracles; grant, we beseech you, that through his merits and prayers, we may be delivered from the flames of hell. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. (Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.26, fol. 238r–v; fig. 18)

Suffrages are not always illustrated. In some manuscripts the prayers receive no pictures; in others, a few favorite saints are given illustrations while those to whom the owner obviously felt less devoted are not. Some Books of Hours have scores of Suffrage miniatures; others might treat them with a few historiated initials. The typical fifteenth-century *Horae* will have about a dozen large Suffrage miniatures. The saints are often shown standing, their attributes in hand, or are depicted in one of the

more dramatic moments of their lives (often their deaths; fig. 17). Figure 18 is typical. It depicts the legend of Nicholas and the mutilated boys. According to tradition, an unscrupulous innkeeper had killed and dismembered three youths, storing their mangled bodies in a pickling tub as food for his guests; Nicholas was able to bring the boys back to life simply by making the sign of the cross over the barrel.

Office of the Dead

The Office of the Dead was in the back of every Book of Hours the way death itself was always at the back of the medieval mind. While most prayers in a Book of Hours are quasi-liturgical (reflecting but not wholely equaling official Church practice), the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours is exactly the same Office found in the Breviaries and Antiphonaries.

It is perhaps easier to understand the function of this prayer by recalling its old name, Office *for* the Dead. It was the cause of considerable anguish for medieval people to think of the potentially long periods of time their relatives would spend in the painful fires of purgatory. The ideal Christian death took place at home, in bed, having confessed, been forgiven, and having just received Last Communion and Extreme Unction. Such a death cleansed the soul and permitted immediate entry into heaven. As was its nature, however, death often caught its victims unprepared. It was assumed that most people's entry into heaven would be detoured by a stay in purgatory, a delay projected to last, judging from medieval indulgences, potentially thousands of years. Along with the funding of funerary Masses, praying the Office was considered the most efficacious means of reducing the fiery price of paradise. This aid was essential, because only the living could help the dead.

The Office of the Dead consists of the three Hours of Vespers, Matins, and Lauds. Ideally, Vespers was prayed in church over the coffin the evening before the Requiem Mass. It was recited or chanted by monks hired for that purpose by the deceased's family or confraternity. Matins and Lauds were then prayed, again by paid monks, on the morning of the funeral itself. The word *dirge*, today meaning a mournful hymn used at funerals, comes from the opening Latin antiphon for Matins, "Dirige, Domine, Deus meus…" (Direct, O Lord, my God, my steps in your sight); in the Middle Ages the word *dirge* commonly referred to the Office of the Dead itself. While monks recited it from Breviaries or chanted it from Antiphonaries, the laity would say their Office from

Books of Hours. Funerals, however, were not the only time the Office was prayed. The tradition that required the ordained to recite the Office on a daily basis also encouraged the laity to pray it at home as often as possible. (The Office is not to be confused with the funeral Mass or the rite of burial. These quite different texts are found in two service books used by the priest, the Missal and the Ritual, respectively.)

Like other Offices, this one is composed mostly of Psalms, which, in this case, have been chosen for the comfort offered to the dead. The more remarkable component of the Office, however, is a moving series of readings from the Book of Job that make up the nine lessons for Matins. The trials endured by Job become an allegory for one's time on earth—or in purgatory. Thus the "I" of the readings ceases to be Job, ceases even to be the person reading the Office and, instead, becomes the voice of the dead man himself, crying for help. Pity and mercy are continually asked for, but through a veil of near despair.

Like the Hours of the Virgin, the Office of the Dead, too, has a "use." Here, it is a function of the different responses that immediately follow each of the nine lessons in Matins. In the use for Paris, for example, the first response is "Qui Lazarum…" (Thou didst raise Lazarus…), the second "Credo quod…" (I believe that…), and so forth.

With rare exceptions, a single miniature illustrates the Office of the Dead. The two most common subjects are Monks Praying the Office of the Dead or a Burial (fig. 19). These, however, are but two episodes from the medieval funeral, the entirety of which can be pieced together from Office of the Dead illustrations with remarkable archeological accuracy. Assembled as a series, these miniatures unfold the events, scene by scene, in an almost cinematic manner. The depicted events include the Deathbed (fig. 20); Preparation of the Corpse for Burial (including washing it, sewing it into a shroud, and placing it into a wood coffin); Funeral Procession from Home to Church; Praying of the Office of the Dead (recited or chanted); Requiem Mass (fig. 21); Distribution of Alms or Bread to the Poor (their prayers for the deceased were thought especially efficacious); Absolution (blessing of the coffin immediately following the Requiem Mass); Burial within the Church (very rare); Procession from Church to Graveyard; Preparations for Burial; and, finally, Burial itself (fig. 19).

These miniatures are rich in detail—catafalques and candles, bones and bells, graves and grievers, coffins and charnels—and reveal much to the attentive eye about medieval rituals. In addition to the visible, miniatures of Deathbeds and Burials often include the unseen

metaphysical Battle for the Soul, in which the deceased's guardian angel fights off a demon for possession of the released soul. And some pictures (especially Requiem Masses), include images of the desired salvific effect of all these services, the Soul Released from Purgatory (fig. 21).

The Iconography for the Office of the Dead is extremely rich and varied. Other common illustrations include the Last Judgment (popular in the earlier history of *Horae*, but continuing into the fifteenth century in Flemish manuscripts), Raising of Lazarus, Parable of Dives and Lazarus (the Feast of Dives or Dives in Hell), Three Living and Three Dead, Job on the Dung Heap, and various types of Death Personified. A few manuscripts show Hell itself; but this is quite rare. Hell is hardly ever depicted in Books of Hours: the thought was too much for the medieval mind to bear.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SERMONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER AND THE ROGATION DAYS IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

Paul W. Robinson

Introduction

Prayer is often idealized in medieval sermons. Even when the Lord's Prayer is the topic, the sermons tend to reflect and promote the practices of the cloister rather than those of the cottage. The fact that the specific context in which a certain sermon on the Lord's Prayer was preached is rarely known compounds this perceived distinction and distance between theological statement and pious practice. The value of the sermons presented here, six sermons from Germany and Austria in the later Middle Ages, is that we do know the occasion for which they were intended—the Rogation Days, three days of prayer and procession prior to Ascension. So the sermons can be read in a context of procession around the bounds of the parish with crosses, bells, relics, and possibly a dragon, and the sermons can be understood as part of a communal practice of prayer for protection. In order to do that, this study addresses the medieval liturgical literature on Rogation, the manuscript collections that contain the six sermons, and themes from the sermons themselves that would emphasize or intersect with themes of the Rogation Days.

The Rogation Days

The three days of prayer and fasting before Ascension, known as Rogation Days, were a common occasion for preaching on the Lord's Prayer. The observance of Rogationtide had its origin in Vienne in the late fifth century. Bishop Mamertus commanded a three-day fast before the celebration of Ascension in order to secure God's blessing in light of calamities that had recently befallen the city and the church. The ritual quickly spread, as witnessed by a letter from Sidonius Apollinaris in Clermont to Mamertus. "We of Clermont know," Apollinaris wrote,

"that all these ills befell your people of Vienne before the Rogations, and have not befallen them since; and therefore it is that we are eager to follow so holy a guide."[1] The observance of Rogationtide was commanded by numerous councils throughout the sixth century but was not recognized in the Roman Use until the beginning of the ninth century. In the sixth century Rome had developed its own festival of prayer, known as the Major Litany that came to be associated with the festival of St. Mark on April 25. When both observances entered the calendar, the three days before Ascension were often referred to as the Minor Litany in order to distinguish them from the April 25 observance.

Rogation sermons, including those that ultimately treat the Lord's Prayer, frequently recount the history of the observance. G. R. Owst records an example, which he thinks might be by John Myrc. The sermon begins by explaining, in English, the fundamental aspects of the Rogation celebration. It distinguishes between the Major and Minor Litany and defines *litany*. It explains that the observance is one of prayer and defines what should be prayed for.

> Ffirste that God scholde withestonde the battell of owre enmyes bothe bodyly and gostly. ffor in that tyme of the yere the devylls and other wickyd spryritis are moste besy a bowte for to drawe a man in to synne and wrechednes. Also holy chyrche prayethe that criste scholde kepe the tender frutis that be done on the erthe to mans helppe, and so scholde al cristen pray for the same.[2]

The spirits are to be driven off by crosses and banners carried in procession and by the ringing of bells, all of which serve as the standards and trumpets of Christ the king. It is clear from this sermon, and from many other examples as well, that the history and nature of the Rogation Days formed part of the proclamation during the celebration. The sermons also tend to deal with the same principle themes surrounding the observance: its time in the church year, the nature and composition of the processions, and the purpose of the prayers.

All of these themes are treated more fully, and explained theologically, in the liturgical works of the Middle Ages. Jean Beleth's *Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis*, William Durandus's *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, and Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend* each offer a fuller depiction of the

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[1] Quoted in *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, ed. by Joyce Bazire and James E. Cross, King's College London Medieval Studies 4 (Exeter, 1989), xvi.

[2] G. R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period c. 1350–1450* (New York, 1926), 201.

celebration than is found in the sermons. A brief sketch of how each of these sources describes the Rogation Days follows in order to lay a foundation for discussing the Rogation observance in the later Middle Ages as it relates to preaching on the Lord's Prayer.

According to Beleth, the Rogation Days prior to Ascension were characterized by fasting and a sevenfold litany for the purpose of warding off adversity, assuring a good harvest, and "that we might through prayer and fasting follow Christ and be made worthy to ascend to the heavens."[3] Having briefly described the nature and rationale for the observance, Beleth turns abruptly to what seems to have been a prominent feature in Rogation processions, especially in France—a representation of a dragon. For the first two days, the dragon preceded the cross and banners with its tail "inflated and long." In the procession on the third day, however, the dragon followed the cross. Beleth uses as many words to describe the signification of this dragon as he does to explain everything else concerning the Minor Litany. The dragon, he writes, "signifies the devil, who for three times—before the law, under the law, and in the time of grace, which are indicated by these three days—had caused human beings to fall or tried to make them fall."[4] On the third day of the Rogation procession the dragon follows the cross because the devil has been conquered by Christ in the time of grace. Nevertheless, he remains a powerful adversary of humankind. "He is dragon and lion," Beleth explains, "Dragon in this way, because he deceived human beings not openly but secretly. He will be lion in the time of Antichrist, because then he will be openly savage in the name of Christ."[5] Although the description might strike a modern reader as esoteric, and notwithstanding Beleth's somewhat confused appeal to biblical texts,[6] the nature of the devil and his battles with Christ and Christians seems to have been a significant aspect of what the Rogation procession was meant to communicate.

Indeed, Beleth's use of the image of the lion in connection with the devil is worth exploring. The reference to the devil as lion arises from the symbolism of the ages of the world, which Beleth has previously described as before the law, under the law, and in the time of grace. The

[3] Jean Beleth, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, PL 202:129–130.
[4] PL 202:130.
[5] PL 202:130.
[6] For example, in explaining the devil as lion, Beleth appeals not as one might expect to 1 Peter 5 but to Apocalypse 12, which describes not a lion but a dragon.

lion represents the devil in yet another time, that of Antichrist, which according to most medieval theologians was a time yet to come. Beleth says, "[The devil] was lion in the passion of the Lord."[7] He does not elaborate, but most likely means that at that time the devil's opposition to Christ was open and obvious as it will be in the time of Antichrist. According to Beleth's account, the lion image does not figure directly in the Rogation procession. His account does, however, make sense of the procession as described in the Sarum *Processional*, an influential English liturgical work.[8] In the Sarum rite, the procession features not a three-dimensional dragon but a dragon banner and a lion banner. As in the observance described by Beleth, these banners are carried in front of the cross on the first two days, behind it on the third. This detail from the Sarum rite, coupled with Beleth's explanation, suggests that the lion was, along with the dragon, a feature of Rogation observances in areas far beyond Salisbury prior to the twelfth century.

William Durandus, writing in the thirteenth century, emphasizes the Rogation Days, or Minor Litany, over the Major Litany in his *Rationale divinorum officiorum*. Beleth introduced both major and minor litanies under the heading "Concerning the litanies." Durandus, although he explains the origin of both litanies, uses the heading "Concerning the rogations" and places his description of them immediately prior to the celebrations surrounding the Ascension, namely, at the time of the church year when the Minor Litany was celebrated. The opening section of his exposition is devoted to the Minor Litany alone.

> The Rogations, which are called *litany*, (litany in Greek is supplication or rogation among us) are made in the three days before the feast of the Ascension of the Lord, in which the holy church asks God that he who once destroyed the counsel of Ahithophel[9] might destroy the counsel of those who are unwilling to live in his peace. Then again we implore God that he might defend us from sudden death and from every infirmity. Indeed we ask the saints that they might intercede with God for us.[10]

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[7] PL 202:130.

[8] See Terence Bailey, *The Processions of Sarum and the Western Church* (Toronto, 1971). Although the diocese of Sarum (Salisbury) was first established in the eleventh century, its processional was based on much earlier traditions. Bailey notes that "the oldest service books devote a good deal of space to rogation processions," 121.

[9] A reference to the events of Absolom's rebellion against David, cf. 2 Samuel 15:31: "Now David had been told, 'Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.' So David prayed, 'O LORD, turn Ahithophel's counsel into foolishness.'"

[10] William Durandus, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, ed. by A. Davril and T. M. Thibodeau, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis CXL A (Turnhout, 1998), 2:499.

Durandus clearly places the focus on prayer by beginning his exposition in this way. He then tells the story of the Major Litany before returning to the topic of the Minor Litany and its foundation, his authority for the account being the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms. Although Durandus dutifully explains that the Major Litany was established by a pope in contrast to a bishop's founding of the Minor Litany, he observes, "Nevertheless the minor is more ancient in time, for it was instituted in the time of the emperor Zeno; the major, indeed, in the time of the emperor Maurice."[11]

In his interpretation of the Minor Litany, Durandus distinguished it from the litanies made in times of duress.

> When, however, we perform the litany for imminent perils in penitential and mournful garb, we represent that last procession of lamenting women following the Lord when he was being led to the cross: lamenting, according to the command of the Lord, over ourselves and over our children. But the litanies are performed in this time [i.e., before Ascension Day] because the church more confidently asks the ascending Christ, who said, "Ask and you shall receive."[12]

The explanation Durandus offers begins with a focus on prayer, the theme taken up in late medieval sermons on Rogation. Preachers, in fact, often took as their text the verse quoted here, "Ask and you shall receive." The foundational character of that verse for the later medieval observance is reflected in a series of Rogation sermons attributed to Berthold of Regensburg. One sermon in the series began with the incipit, "Ask and you shall receive," and the next, "Ask that your joy might be complete." The author gave the final sermon in the series, the one on the Lord's Prayer, the incipit, "Ask and it shall be given to you."[13]

Only after explaining the relationship between the Rogation litany and Christ's ascension does Durandus introduce the practice of the Rogation processions. The processions feature the cross and relics of saints "so that with the standard of the cross and the prayers of the saints the demons might be expelled."[14] Banners carried in the

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[11] *Ratinale*, 2:500.

[12] *Rationale*, 2:501.

[13] Klosterneuberg 450, f. 293r, 294r, 295r. "Ask and it shall be given you" is the wording in Matthew 7:7 and Luke 11:9. "Ask and you shall receive" is the wording in John 16:24. All three verses were routinely cited in connection with Rogation.

[14] *Rationale*, 2:502.

processions represent "the victory of the resurrection and ascension of Christ."[15] By way of explanation, Durandus cites, among other things, Constantine's addition of the sign of the cross to his banners of war—a reminder, perhaps, that these elements of the procession had been associated with more than spiritual victories. Durandus then observes that "in certain places, the litany is made through the fields," indicating that a procession into the farmers' fields or around the boundaries of the parish was not a common feature of all rogation observances.[16] At this point, the dragon mentioned also by Beleth makes his appearance in Durandus's description: "A certain dragon, also, with a long tail, erect and filled, is accustomed to be carried for the first two days in front of the cross and banners."[17] Like Beleth, Durandus explains the dragon as a symbol of the Devil with the three days of procession representing the three ages. Unlike Beleth, Durandus omits any reference to the Devil as a lion, and his explanation of the dragon is in general more logical and compact than that of his predecessor. Finally, among notes concerning the liturgical celebration of Rogation, Durandus includes a brief exposition of the appointed Gospel, Luke 11 that could well serve as a sermon outline.[18] (This passage, the story of a man who asks his friend for three loaves of bread, served also as the basis for Bernard of Clairvaux's sermon on Rogation.)[19] According to Durandus, this Gospel shows "that we ought to ask with perseverance," thus continuing the focus on prayer that he shows throughout his explanation of Rogation.

Jacobus de Voragine, a contemporary of Durandus, covered similar ground concerning the Rogation Days in his *Golden Legend*.[20] Jacobus begins with the Major Litany for the standard reasons, that is, because of its origin at Rome and because he attributes its founding to Gregory the Great. According to Jacobus, God punished the Romans, who fasted through Lent but gave in to excess after Easter, with a plague. He stressed the suddenness of death by this plague—a person might

[15] *Rationale*, 2:502.
[16] *Rationale*, 2:502.
[17] *Rationale*, 2:503.
[18] *Rationale*, 2:504–5.
[19] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons for the Summer Season: Liturgical Sermons from Rogationtide and Pentecost*, trans. by Beverly Mayne Kienzle and James Jarzembowski, Cistercian Fathers Series 53 (Kalamazoo, 1991), 27–8.
[20] *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. by William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, N. J., 1993).

sneeze and then immediately expire. This is the reason, Jacobus maintained, for the custom of saying "God bless you" after a sneeze, as well as explaining the practice, still common in his day, of making the sign of the cross before a yawn.[21]

In spite of its lower status as a liturgical rite, Jacobus devoted more lines to the Minor Litany or Rogation Days, so called "because in these three days we implore the help of the saints."[22] He explains in words very like those of Durandus how this observance flows from Christ's ascent into heaven and what is the reason for fasting and praying. Jacobus names William of Auxerre as the source of these explanations, an authority that may also lie behind Durandus on this point. Jacobus goes on to describe in some detail a typical Rogation procession along with what, to him at least, it signified.

> The Lesser Litany is called the Procession, because on this occasion the Church holds a great procession at which the cross is borne aloft, the bells are rung, the standard is carried. In some churches men carry a dragon with a huge tail. All the saints are besought one by one for their protection. In this procession we carry the cross and ring the bells to make the devils flee in terror; for just as a king in the midst of his army has the royal insignias, namely, trumpets and standards or banners, so Christ the eternal King in the midst of his Church militant has bells for trumpets and crosses for standards. Any tyrant would be terrified if he heard in his land the trumpets and saw the banners of some powerful king, his enemy; and so the demons who are in that murky air are sore afraid when they hear Christ's trumpets—the bells—and catch sight of his standards—the crosses. It is said that this was the reason for ringing the church bells when storms were brewing, namely, that the demons who stir up the storms should hear the trumpets of the eternal King and flee aghast, letting the storms die down. Of course, there was another reason, which was that the bells would warn the faithful and incite them to pray hard in view of the impending danger.[23]

Following still more reasons for carrying the cross in procession, Jacobus refers to the use of the dragon in the procession. Like Beleth and Durandus, he notes the symbolism of times before the law, under the law, and in the time of grace. He also notes that the use of the dragon is the custom in "some churches and especially in France."[24]

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[21] Durandus had noted the same in his *Rationale*, 2:500.
[22] *The Golden Legend*, 1:287.
[23] *The Golden Legend*, 1:287.
[24] *The Golden Legend*, 1:288.

The three-dimensional dragon may have been absent from the German observance of Rogation. Texts connected with the sermons studied here, as well as the sermons themselves, mention banners, and it is possible that one of these was adorned with a dragon, as was the practice at Salisbury. The standard items in the German celebration seem to have been cross, banners, relics, and bells, all carried in procession. As was often the case with medieval religious festivals, however, the faithful engaged in other practices as well, not necessarily to the liking of the preachers. In his 1519 sermon on Rogationtide, Martin Luther complained about the state of the processions.

> Unfortunately, the processions have become scandalously misused. People want only to see and to be seen in them. They indulge in inane babble and hilarity, to say nothing of even worse conduct and sin. The village processions have become especially disgraceful. These people give themselves to carousing in the taverns. They handle the processional crosses and banners in such a manner that it would not be surprising if God would let us all perish in one year.[25]

How would a preacher decide to preach on the Lord's Prayer in the midst of all this? And what would he say? In many cases, the preacher would have followed the suggestion of his collection of sermons for the church year, so the place of sermons on Rogation and on the Lord's Prayer in the collections must be addressed.

Lord's Prayer Preaching and Rogation

Sermons on the Lord's Prayer are not frequently found in collections of sermons, especially those intended for use on the Sundays of the church year (*sermones de tempore*) or on saints' days (*sermones de sanctis*). The reason for this is simple: the readings appointed for the church year did not include the accounts—the prayer is recorded in both Matthew and Luke—of the prayer's institution. Sermons on the Lord's Prayer, when they are included in sermon collections at all, occur most often in three places, at least in those collections whose contents serve a specific use other than the interest of the collector. Some sermon collections have a plainly catechetical thrust, and they join sermons on the prayer to those on other catechetical texts, such as the Apostles' Creed or the

[25] *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia, 1969), 42:90.

Ave Maria. In a collection *de tempore* or *de sanctis*, Lord's Prayer sermons can be found at the margins of the collection, either before or after those sermons that conform to the lectionary. In some cases, however, sermons on the prayer find their way into the collection at the time of Rogation, since preaching on the prayer was a traditional part of the observance from at least the High Middle Ages. Peter Abelard, for example, wrote a sermon on the Lord's Prayer specifically for the Rogation Days as part of his sermons for the church year.[26] So by the later Middle Ages, when sermon collections were being assembled, the prayer was included, if not frequently then persistently, in connection with Rogation. Five such sermons from Germany and Austria have been selected for this study. Though Johann Geiler von Kasisersberg did not author a Lord's Prayer sermon for Rogation, he is included because Rogation plays a role within his series of sermons on the Lord's Prayer preached during Lent and Easter. There follows a brief description of each sermon in chronological order, beginning in the thirteenth century with Berthold of Regensburg and concluding on the eve of the Reformation with the *Plenarium*.

Berthold of Regensburg (d. 1272)

The Franciscan Berthold of Regensburg is identified as the author of four sermons for Rogation in a thirteenth-century manuscript from Klosterneuberg that presents multiple sermons for Sundays and festivals from Advent to Ascension by various famous preachers.[27] Of the four sermons for Rogationtide attributed to Berthold, the first three are labeled "in rogacionibus" and the fourth is titled "Pater Noster fratris perhtoldi." As is the case with many sermons ascribed to Berthold, it is far from certain that he is the author of this particular set of

[26] "Sermo XIV. Expositio dominicae orationis, in diebus rogationum, quae litaniae dicuntur," PL 178 col. 489–495. The rule that Lord's Prayer sermons are connected with Rogation in *de tempore* collections is firm enough that I have found only one exception to date. Conrad of Brundelsheim treats the Lord's Prayer in two sermons for Ash Wednesday. Cf. Johannes Baptist Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones für die Zeit von 1150–1350*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters 43 (Münster, 1972), 1:723.

[27] Klosterbeuberg 450. The description of the manuscript is "Sermones (numero 344), quorum plures tantummodo excerpti, in dominicis ac festis Domini fratrum Sybotonis, Conradi de Saxonis, Bertholdi de Ratisbona, Sifridi de Domo Teutonica, Wilhelmi, Graeculi, Sifridi Nigri, Anselmi, Bedae, Gregorii, Lucae et auctorum anonymorum ad adventu usque ad dominicam post Ascensionem."

sermons.[28] They are found only in this manuscript, and the sermon on the Lord's Prayer does not correspond to other sermons by Berthold on that subject that survive in multiple manuscripts.[29] Whether or not the sermon is by Berthold of Regensburg, it illustrates the connection between preaching on the Lord's Prayer and the Rogation observance. The first sentence, "Ask and it will be given to you, etc.," marks it as a sermon for Rogation. As an incipit, the sentence connects this sermon to the previous two, whose incipits follow the same pattern. The first is "Ask and you shall receive"; the second is "Ask so that your joy might be full." The liturgical manuals routinely connected Rogation to Christ's Ascension with the words "Ask and you shall receive."

Melk Anonymous (ca. 1300)

A manuscript from the monastery of Melk contains an anonymous sermon on the Lord's Prayer placed between a "Sermon in the time of Easter" and a Rogation sermon.[30] Given the history of the celebration and the practices of other manuscripts, we may safely assume that the Lord's Prayer sermon is meant to complement the sermon for Rogation. In addition, the Rogation sermon begins with a reference to the Lord's Prayer. The first sentence reads, "After our Lord and Savior handed over to his disciples the measure of praying, he also taught them how they ought to pray."[31] This same image of Christ teaching the disciples to pray had been used to introduce the Lord's Prayer sermon. "We read in the Gospel that the holy apostles asked the Lord to teach them to pray. This we also ought to do."[32]

Peregrinus of Oppeln (fl. 1300–1327)

Peregrinus, a Dominican who became provincial of Poland and served as inquisitor, authored several sermon collections. A series of Rogation

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[28] Hans-Jochen Schiewer, "German Sermons in the Middle Ages" in *The Sermon*, directed by Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Turnhout, 2000), 869.

[29] The two better-attested sermons are "Pater Noster qui es in celis" and "Pater Noster vos rurales." In Klosterneuberg 1145, the former is titled "Pater Noster commendatum a tribus" and the latter, as the incipit would suggest, is labeled "Cum predicas laycis sic procede."

[30] Melk 617, f. 55r–56r.

[31] "Postquam dominus et salvator noster mensuram orandi discipulis suis tradidit, eosque qualiter orare deberent instruxit." Melk 617, f. 56r.

[32] "Legimus in evangelio, quod sancti apostoli rogaverunt dominum, ut doceret eos orare. Hoc et nos facere debemus." Melk 617, f. 55r.

sermons attributed to him survive in a single manuscript.[33] A sermon on Luke 11, "Ask and it will be given you," is followed by a discourse, possibly a sermon, on the Major Litany. A third sermon provides a brief exposition of the Lord's Prayer. In spite of the reference to the Major Litany, the manuscript seems to intend the sermons to serve the Rogation Days, since the series is followed by a sermon for Ascension Day. It is not unusual to find an explanation of both litanies in the context of the Rogation Days. The explanation offered in this manuscript is unusual in that it does not explicitly mention the Minor Litany at all. A much longer explanation, also attributed to Peregrinus and found at the very end of his *Sermones de sanctis*, mentions both litanies.[34] This longer explanation is very similar to that found in the liturgical manuals and even mentions the dragon.

But a careful reading of the explanation of the Major Litany reveals aspects more in keeping with the Rogation Days. For example, the author points out that the church observes prayer and fasting especially for the fruits of the earth—an emphasis that is prominent in Rogation rather than in the Major Litany. Furthermore, when the processions are described, the appeal is made to the tradition begun by the Bishop of Vienne, again pointing to the Minor Litany or Rogation rather than to the Major Litany. Thus to assert that Peregrinus's sermon on the Lord's Prayer is meant to serve the Rogation observance does not become a circular argument. There is other evidence to support this association, in spite of the apparent emphasis on the Major Litany.

The Lord's Prayer sermon by Peregrinus strikes the modern reader as an outline rather than a sermon. The author has constructed phrases related to each petition that are parallel either in thought or in sound. Although such a treatment could easily have been expanded, that is, used as an outline for a longer sermon, that may not have been the case. It is quite possible that in the context of a rogation service or procession the exposition of the prayer was of necessity brief but memorable.

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[33] Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Clm. 4632, f. 158v–f. 160v. See Schneyer, 4:548–557.

[34] "[L]etanie in anno bis dicuntur scilicet in festo marcii que dicitur letania major et tribus diebus ante ascensionem domini que dicitur minor." Universitätsbibliothek Graz 319, f. 210r. This sermon concludes the manuscript. There is nothing missing; the explicit is found at the bottom of f. 210v.

Jordan of Quedlinburg (d. ca. 1370–1380)

The Augustinian Jordan of Quedlinburg taught in the order's *general studia* in Erfurt and Magdeburg before becoming provincial for Saxony and Thuringia. He included a sermon on the Lord's Prayer in his first *Sermones de tempore* as one of three sermons for Rogation.[35] The first and third sermons begin with the verses from John 16 that were frequently associated with the festival; the second is the Lord's Prayer sermon whose incipit is simply *Pater noster* and begins with a quote from Gregory the Great. This sermon on the prayer is far too long to have been preached all at once, especially as part of a Rogation procession, so it seems unlikely to have served the festival in this form. In fact, the preface to the sermon suggests that it is meant to provide material for preaching rather than a finished sermon.

> Because in the preceding Gospel and in the sermon on the same Gospel many things were said concerning prayer yet nothing there touched on the Lord's Prayer, which is first among all other prayers. And because now is the time of Rogation, therefore, for an introduction to that abundant material, I have decided to insert here an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, previously written by the Lord, presented by me to instruct future readers.[36]

Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg (d. 1510)

Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg, the Strasbourg city preacher, preached to his congregation on the Lord's Prayer every day during Lent and on the Sundays after Easter in 1508. He did not preach on the Rogation Days themselves, since by then he was preaching only on Sundays, and he did not always preach on the Lord's Prayer, because by Easter he had reached the word *Amen*. References to his series of sermons on the Lord's Prayer are included here because he mentions practices associated with the Rogation Days in his explanation of the prayer, linking Rogation with the Lord's Prayer in a way different from the practice of the sermon collections.

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[35] Cf. Schneyer, 3:815.

[36] "Quia in proximis precedenti ewangelio et in sermone eiusdem ewangelii plura dicuntur de orationibus nonnulla eciam ibi tanguntur de oratione dominica que est omni orationum primi cetera. Et quia nunc est tempus rogacionum ideo pro habundanciori istius materie deduccione decrevi exposicionum orationis dominice alias domino auctore per me editam hic inserere ad instruccionum legencium posteriorum." Kremsmünster 165, f. 289r.

Plenarium, 1518

The *Plenarium* of 1518, a collection of sermons for the church year, records a brief treatment of the prayer in the context of the sermon for the Fifth Sunday of Easter.[37] This Sunday was the last prior to Ascension Day, and, as the preacher noted, was referred to as prayer Sunday, and the week as cross week.[38] The exposition of the prayer itself, like that attributed to Berthold, is very brief. Each petition is explained in a sentence or two after the general admonition that this prayer taught by Christ is to be prayed daily. A final section, however, aims toward the celebration of the Rogation days.

The Sermons in the Context of the Rogation Days

Evidence from sermon collections suggests that by the late Middle Ages a sermon on the Lord's Prayer was a common, if not indispensable, part of the observance of the Rogation days. Many collections *de tempore* provided a Lord's Prayer sermon for Rogation, although many more did not. It was really not necessary, since a sermon on the Lord's Prayer could easily be found elsewhere. It would, however, have been more convenient than looking elsewhere to provide a sermon on the prayer, which fact suggests that preaching practice drove the inclusion of these sermons. That seems to be the case also for a sermon on the prayer added to a collection in a single manuscript only.

To document the practice is one thing, to understand it, perhaps, something else. What impact would a sermon on the Lord's Prayer have had in the context of the Rogation observance?

André Vauchez argues convincingly that Jacobus de Voragine, and so by extension Beleth and Durandus, demonstrates in his treatment of the litanies an understanding of Christianity as a religion that sanctifies

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[37] The text is published in Hasak's 1872 collection of sermons for the church year drawn from various *Plenaria. Die Himmelstraße, oder: Die Evangelien des Jahres in Erklärungen für das christliche Volk nach deutschen Plenarien aus der Zeit 1500*, ed. by P. Vincenz Hasak (Manz, 1882), 259–262.

[38] "Dieser sonntag wird geheissen der sonntag des Gebetes, und die woche die Kreutzwoche. Auch heissen die tage in diser woche die bettage, unter welchem der heutige sonntag der erste ist, wann das heutig evangelium sagt vom Gebethe." *Die Himmelstraße*, 259.

time and not space.[39] According to Vauchez, Jacobus "by eliminating all references to the rural world and fertility from his description of the Rogations, and by interpreting the rites in a spiritualistic sense, modified their meaning significantly."[40] Even if Vauchez is overstating the case, the Rogation Days do present a complex layering of meaning and practice. The authors of liturgical handbooks presented one explanation of the dragon; the common people participating in the procession may well have understood something else.

The rituals of the Rogation Days were at least multivalent if not, as Vauchez suggests, in competition with each other. The Lord's Prayer and sermons explaining it appear at first glance to have little to do with the fertility of the earth and protection for the crops. Yet it is important to note, perhaps as a bit of a corrective to Vauchez, that the preachers studied here who do mention the practices connected with Rogation never do so in a critical or disapproving way. Even Luther was not critical of the processions themselves but of the way they were held. Geiler, in fact, used the example of Rogation as a lesson about how all prayer ought to be made. Preachers certainly wished to take the opportunity provided by the observance to inculcate appropriate practices of prayer and to strengthen the connection to the celebration of Christ's ascension. We should not be surprised that this sort of theological gloss was applied to folk ritual. The sermons on the Lord's Prayer presented here all need to be understood in the context of the Rogation Days. Three themes strongly connect the sermon to the celebration: protection, community, and memory.

In the sermons that are the subject of this study, preachers did not emphasize what Vauchez explains as the rural and folk aspects of Rogation, but they did embrace the goal of these rituals in protecting the parish and its crops. In the accounts of the festival included in Lord's Prayer sermons, its historic origins and liturgical aspects of the celebration take pride of place. We need not assume that these explanations are necessarily at odds with popular belief. A story that explained how the very same type of observance had delivered Vienne or Rome from calamity held out hope for a populace looking for protec-

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[39] André Vauchez, "Liturgy and Folk Culture in the *Golden Legend*," *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, ed. by Daniel E. Bornstein, trans. by Margery J. Schneider (Notre Dame, 1993). Vauchez treats Jacobus de Voragine and Jean Beleth as his sources but does not consider the work of Durandus.

[40] Vauchez, 138.

tion from storms and malicious spirits. Sermons on the Lord's Prayer for Rogation do, however, emphasize that protection results from the prayer connected with these processions rather than the rituals of the processions themselves. The Melk Anonymous notes, "Through [prayer] vices are extinguished and the holy virtues are acquired. Through this the devil is conquered and the kingdom of heaven is extended."[41] The final petition of the Lord's Prayer also forms a strong link to the themes of Rogation. Although the evil in "deliver us from evil" was never abstract, the Rogation observance would have lent the plea a certain urgency.

The Melk Anonymous text states it simply and starkly, "But deliver us from evil. This is from the devil."[42] So also the Berthold sermon clearly defines the evil being prayed against as the devil and hell.[43] Peregrinus rhymes the traditional Augustinian triad of tempters—the devil, the world, and the flesh: "But deliver us from evil. Amen. [That is, from] the adversity of the world, the perversity of humanity, diabolical cunning, disaster everlasting. Amen."[44] Preachers in the later Middle Ages clearly portrayed the devil, often represented as a dragon in the Rogation processions, as being at the center of present as well as future calamity by his cunning nature and activity in temptation, but they also recognized the weakness of human beings who succumbed to temptation. So the evil from which people needed to be delivered was as much their own propensity to sin as it was the devil's machinations. Jordan of Quedlinburg's long disquisition on the seventh petition clearly internalizes evil. Though some of Jordan's approach could be attributed to a monastic context and his fondness for quoting Bernard, it is quite in keeping with the tradition of pairing a vice with the seventh petition. The most common scheme pairs *luxuria* with this peition, but Jordan used *accidia*, sloth.

> But we pray that we might be liberated from these things lest they impede or slow us in spiritual exercise. Therefore we say "deliver us from evil," from that by which we are beguiled in understanding, fail in working,

[41] "Per hanc vicia extinguntur, et virtutes sancte adquiruntur, per hanc dyabolos vincitur et ad regnum celorum pertingitur." Melk 617, f. 55r.

[42] "Sed libera nos a malo. Hoc est a dyabolo." Melk 617, f.

[43] "Septimo sed libera nos malo id est a dyabola et inferno libera nos." Klosterneuberg 450, f. 295r.

[44] "Sed libera nos a malo. Amen. Mundane adversitas, humane perversitas, dyabolice calliditatis, sempiterne calamitatis. Amen." Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Clm 4632, f. 160v.

> [or] are brought low in resisting. Through this petition sloth is excluded, which according to Bernard is a certain torpor of the soul.[45]

Though Jordan was not connecting the sin of sloth specifically to the practices of the Rogation Days, Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg did juxtapose the need for activity and the Rogation processions. On the Sunday before Ascension, in recognition of the coming Rogation Days, Geiler preached on the topic of prayer. He underscored the teaching woven throughout his sermons that it was not enough simply to pray without also working so that what was prayed for could actually happen.[46] Geiler illustrated this with an example appropriate to Rogationtide: "Just as it is not enough to pray for daily bread from God, but one also ought to plow the fields, to plant, etc."[47] The rest of the sermon concerned itself with the proper attitude for prayer without further reference to the observance of the Rogation Days. Geiler had, however, already used the example of Rogation observances in a sermon on the third petition on March 29.

> It is not enough for the pursuit of a good harvest that the farmers walk with crosses and relics and bells that they might beat against the storms. It is also necessary that they remove the posts; they dig, prune, they insert new posts; they bind vines to the post, etc. Thus for the pursuit of the kingdom it is not enough to pray; one needs to remove the posts: the custom of old evils; one needs also to dig: through the exercise of abstinence, fasts and vigils; one needs to prune all the senses: the eyes from the sight of vanities, the ears from the hearing of detractions and ugly gossip, the mouth from lies, etc., the tongue from tasting, etc.; to drive in the new posts of good habits and customs, and to bind to them through perseverance.[48]

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[45] "Sed petimus nos sic ab eis liberari ne in exercicio spirituali nos impediant aut retardent. Dicamus ergo *libera nos a malo*, quo decipimur in cognoscendo, quo deficimus in operando, quo de[j]icimur in resistendo. Per hanc peticionem excluditur accidia, que secundum *Bernhardum* est quidam animum torpor." Kremsmünster 165, f. 103v.

[46] "Qui vult ut oratio sua semper exaudiatur/curet ut nedum oret confidenter/humiliter/et finaliter/sed et orare curet 'ordinaliter' quemadmodum superius declaratum est: scilicet quod non solum petamus rem sed etiam conemur pro posse nostro ad habendum eam." Johann Geiler von Kaisersberg, *De oratione dominica sermones* (Straßburg, 1510), Liv.

[47] "Sicut non satis est petere panem quotidianum a deo: sed oportet colere agros; seminare etc." Geiler, *De oratione dominica sermones*, Liv.

[48] "Non satis est: pro assecutione vindemie bone/quod agricole vadant cum crucibus et reliquis/et campanas contra tempestates pulsent. Necesse est etiam ut palos extrahant: fodiant/putent/novos palos inserant: vites ad palum alligent, etc. Sic pro assecutione regni/non satis est orare: oportet extrahere palos: antiquarum malarum consuetudinum: oportet etiam fodere: per exercitia abstinentie/ieiuniorum/et vigiliarum

Here the Strasbourg preacher illustrated a point that he had taken over from Gabriel Biel with a reference tailored to his audience.[49] He used the crosses, relics, and bells associated with Rogation to make the point that prayer would not replace work in the case of temporal or spiritual benefits. The preacher reminded his audience that prayer, even accompanied by time-honored procession, was not magical, but required cooperation between God and people.

Those who prayed and processed during the Rogation Days did so as subjects of God in God's kingdom. The liturgical works compared the Rogation procession to that of an earthly ruler announcing his presence to the enemy and celebrating his triumph. Jordan of Quedlinburg reflects this theme, too, in his treatment of the seventh petition. "We ask for the threefold kingdom of God. We exclude the threefold kingdom of the devil."[50] Jordan recapitulates the theme of the second petition, "Your kingdom come," which would also have resonated with the meaning assigned to the Rogation procession. The notion of God's kingdom frequently elicited contrast with the devil's kingdom. The Melk Anonymous characterizes the latter as the realm of excess, pride, and envy, while chastity, humility, and love reign in God's kingdom.[51]

The whole community joined in prayer for protection against evil during the Rogation Days. The procession would have put the community on display. Although such a display always raised questions of power and precedence, in this case it was aimed very specifically at the common good, asking protection from enemies both physical and spiritual for the people gathered in the procession and for their crops. In this context, the communal nature of the Lord's Prayer is highlighted. It was the one prayer that every Christian was to know, and it was fre-

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oportet putare omnes sensus/oculos a visu vanorum aures ab auditu detractionum/et cantilenarum turpium/os a mendatiis: etc. linguam a gustu etc.: infigere novos palos/ bonorum habituum et consuetudinum/et alligare per perseverantiam." Geiler, *De oratione dominica sermones*, Dviiir–Dviiiv.

[49] Gabriel Biel's treatment of the Lord's Prayer was a major source for Geiler, who quoted liberally and directly from it, most often without attribution. In this case, the text that preceded the illustration was from Biel: "Necesse est etiam pro assecutione totis nos quibus possumus viribus laborare et ad hec mediis viis et modis debitis ad hoc ordinatis toto conatu tendere per observantiam mandatorum, per contemptum mundanorum, per fervens desiderium eternorum." Gabriel Biel, *Canonis misse expositio*, ed. by Heiko Oberman and William Courtenay (Wiesbaden, 1966), 3:102.

[50] "Petimus triplex regnum dei, excludimus triplex regnum dyaboli." Kremsmünster 165, f. 103r.

[51] "[U]t ubi regnabat luxuria superbia invidia. regnet castitas humilitas caritas." Melk 617, f. 55v.

quently prayed in common. It was the corporate prayer *par excellence.* In addition, as preachers always emphasized, the way the faithful address God in the prayer—"Our Father"—emphasized community. All who pray "our," are united with each other. Peregrinus called the phrase *Our Father* "the testimony of a fraternal inheritance."[52] Jordan explained that one conclusion derived from this form of address was "we are all to be brothers." He then cited Augustine, who had admonished the rich against pride in their dealings with the poor by saying that they could not call God their Father "truly and piously" unless they also considered the poor their brothers.[53] Although this sort of exposition was a commonplace in Lord's Prayer sermons whatever the context, the prayer's emphasis on the community created by praying "Our Father" would have been accented by the communal aspects of the Rogation observance.

Saints were also part of the community. Christians prayed the prayer that Christ had given to his disciples when they asked him, "Lord, teach us to pray." The Melk Anonymous connects the implied audience to the disciples. "We read in the Gospel that the holy apostles asked the Lord to teach them to pray. This we also ought to do."[54] In the act of praying this prayer, believers in the Middle Ages placed themselves in community with those who had first followed Christ. Similarly, the sermon extols the power of prayer in general with an appeal to the community of believers. "Through [prayer] holy men even divided the sea and made the sun stand still. They closed and opened heaven, moreover they raised the dead."[55] The holy men were Moses and Elijah, but the implication is that the power they displayed is available to those who have inherited their faith. Finally, the saints in heaven were not only considered part of the community, but played a central role in Rogation as those to whom prayer should be offered. The Melk

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[52] "[T]estimonio fraterne hereditatis." Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Clm 4632, f. 160v.

[53] "[O]mnis nos esse fratres/tam pauperes quam divites nobiles et ignobiles/*unde Augustinus in libro de sermone domini in monte* admonentur hic divites et genere nobiles non superbire adversus pauperes et ignobiles quam simul dicunt deo pater noster quod non possunt veri ac pie dicere nisi se fratres esse cognoscant." Kremsmünster 165, f. 83v–84r.

[54] "Legimus in evangelio, quod sancti apostoli rogaverunt dominum, ut doceret eos orare. Hoc et nos facere debemus." Melk 617, f. 55r.

[55] "Per hanc ei sancti homini et mare diviserunt, et solem stare fecerunt, celum etiam clauserunt et aperuerunt, insuper et mortuos suscitaverunt." Melk 617, f. 55r.

Anonymous text offers a roll call of heavenly saints in an allegorical explanation of the phrase *in celis*.

> Allegorically, however, the heavens are the saints, concerning whom the Psalm says, "The heavens confess your wonders, Lord." And the saints are deservedly called the heavens, because in them is the sun of justice, Christ the Lord, and the moon, namely the holy church in angels and men. And the star of the sea, that is, Holy Mary, mother of God, and all the innumerable stars, the saints, whether apostles, martyrs, confessors, [or] virgins.[56]

Angels and men, Mary and the saints, all form the community that prays.

Finally, the Rogation observance and the Lord's Prayer as a topic for preaching were linked by their appeal to memory. The Lord's Prayer was to be burned into the memory of every Christian, and preachers attempted to explain the petitions of the prayer in a way that was memorable. Sometimes, this meant little more than repeating the words of the prayer and offering a paraphrase of each petition. The Berthold sermon, quoted in its entirety, is an example of this approach.

> Ask and it will be given to you, etc. Note that a person asks seven very great petitions in the Lord's Prayer. First, Our Father, you who are in heaven, holy be your name, that is, make me holy in body and in soul. Second, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, that is, make me as the angel who is in heaven fulfills your will. Third, your kingdom come, that is, give me your kingdom. Fourth, give us today our daily bread, that is, give us the eternal feast that will remain always. Fifth, and forgive us our debts, etc., that is, forgive all sins of heart, mouth, work. Sixth, and do not lead us into temptation, that is, do not permit us to be tempted mortally. Seventh, but deliver us from evil, that is, deliver us from the devil and hell.[57]

Such an approach may well have been more common in practice than the manuscripts suggest. A brief sermon would have been well suited to the Rogation observance. Yet brevity was not the only way medieval preachers attempted to aid the memory. In many sermons on the Lord's

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[56] "Allegorice autem celi sancti sunt, de quibus dicit pslamis, 'Confitebuntur celi mirabilia tua domine.' Et merito celi vocantur sancti. quia in eis est sol iusticie christus dominus, et luna sancta scilicet ecclesia in angelis et hominibus. Et stella maris id est sancta dei genitor maria, et alie stelle innumerabiles sancti utrum apostoli martires confessores virgines." Melk 617, f. 55r–55v.

[57] Notice that the second and third petitions are reversed. This is a very unusual error because the text of the prayer was so well known. Klosterneuburg 450, f. 295r.

Prayer, the petitions are made to correspond to the seven virtues, seven vices, seven gifts of the Spirit, and even the beatitudes, which had to be trimmed down from eight to seven in order to fit the scheme.

Images also helped to make a sermon memorable. Jordan of Quedlinburg closed his Lord's Prayer sermon with an elaborate image, an allegorical interpretation of the tree of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 4. He suggests that he employs this image so that even the uneducated will be able to grasp the meaning of the prayer.[58] The tree is the Lord's Prayer, proceeding in one trunk from the mouth of the Lord and then branching out into the seven petitions. Two stars at the top of the tree serve to enlighten the mind and excite faith. The leaves are the virtues and the seven animals and birds gathered near the tree are the vices. The fruits the tree bears are the seven gifts of the Spirit. The image of the tree was quite common in the Middle Ages and was used frequently in expounding the virtues and vices.[59] These may have suggested the allegory to Jordanus, or he may have come to it more or less independently, since images of trees and animals were commonly used as aids to memory.[60] Whatever its source, Jordanus underscored the value of the image by appealing to its universality.

> In this tree is said to be food for the world, because any person of whatever condition arises from it, and is able to take hold of its fruit according to the need of his status, whether just or a sinner, learned or unlearned, whether contemplative or active.[61]

As imaginative as the treatment might be, its ultimate purpose was to make the sermon memorable to the hearer and to enable the tenets of the prayer to be put into practice.

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[58] "Ut autem exclusio vitiorum et introduccio virtutum donorum beatitudinum et fructuum per singulas petitiones secundum adaptaciones predictas lucide et occultatum eciam simplicibus et rudibus patere possint omnia hec in unam arborem redigere decrevi." Kremsmünster 165, f. 106b–107a.

[59] Bloomfield traced the use of the image to Cassian and ultimately to the Vulgate, where pride is described as the root of all evil (Ecclesiasticus 10:13). *Seven Deadly Sins*, 70. Literal pictures of the tree of virtues and vices became common. Mary Carruthers has described these pictures as "realizations on parchment of the kind of meditative, *compositional* mental imagining we encounter in Hugh of St. Victor's 'De arca Noe,'" *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), 254.

[60] Carruthers, 126–7, 209–10.

[61] "In hac eciam arbore dicitur esse esca universorum quia quilibet homo cuiuscumque conditionis existat ex ea fructum capere potest secundum exigenciam sui status sive iustus sive peccator, doctus sive ydiota, sive contemplativus sive activus." Kremsmünster 165, f. 108a.

Memory, however, involved far more than remembering the words of the prayer. Those who prayed the prayer did so in imitation of the disciples who had been taught this prayer by Christ himself. Praying the Lord's Prayer was an act of memory that connected those praying with the first followers of Christ. Likewise, the Rogation procession was made in imitation of the processions originally held in Vienne or Rome, which is why descriptions of the history of the festival were frequently included in Rogation sermons. Or the procession might have been understood, as the 1518 *Plenarium* has it, to be an imitation of Christ and the Apostles going to the Mount of Olives, to the moment of Christ's ascension.

> Now much more we should observe on these three days in this week that the Christian folk in this week go into the churches with processions, as is the custom in certain foundations and churches. These processions have a figurative and spiritual significance in this that the Lord with his disciples walked upon this earth, and especially in this, there the Lord went to Jerusalem, to the Mount of Olives, on the day of his ascension, there his disciples followed. Thus he climbed the mount, understand: into the heavens. And for the remembrance of this one carries the banners before and the cross in the procession, according to the example of Jesus Christ. Which cross presents a sign of the Lord, also an encouragement to us, to contemplate the life of Christ, since God has great pleasure therein.[62]

This sermon is unusual in linking the procession with Christ's walking upon the earth up to the point of his ascension rather than reading it as a proclamation of the victorious reign that follows his ascension. Whatever the specific understanding, the Christians of the Middle Ages imitated Christ and his faithful followers throughout history when they gathered in procession and prayed the Lord's Prayer together, all with the hope of gaining the blessing and protection from evil that God had granted in previous times.

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[62] "Nun sollen wir fürbas merken von disen drei tagen in diser woche, dasz die christlichen menschen in diser woche mit procession gond in die kirchen, als in etlich stifften und kirchen gewohnheit ist. Dise procession wird uns figurirt und geistlich bedeutet in dem, das der Herr mit seinen lieben jüngern uff disem erdreich gangen ist, und sunderlich in dem, do der Herr ging aus Jerusalem an dem tag seiner auffahrt auf den berg Oliveti, do im seine jünger nachfolgten. Also ist er aufgestiegen den berg, verstand:—in dem himmel. Und von der gedächtniss wegen trägt man vorhin die fahnen, und das kreutz in der procession, nach dem ebenbild Jesu Christi. Welches kreutz ein anzeigung gibt des Herrn, auch uns zu einer reitzung, das leben Cristi zu betrachten, wann gott ein grosz wolgefallen darin hat." *Die Himmelstraße*, 262.

Sermons for Rogation, whether or not they treated the Lord's Prayer, were intended to remind the faithful of the value of prayer and the proper way of praying. That instruction might have stood in stark contrast to some aspects of the celebration, but the preacher's exhortation might just as well have been apprehended by the faithful and have added the weight of theological authority to their ritual. In any case, sermons on the Lord's Prayer connected with Rogation remind us that for the vast majority of medieval Christians, whether clergy or lay, prayer was just as often a communal as an individual pursuit, that it was tied to rituals like the Rogation processions, and that it was considered powerful for achieving ends both spiritual and temporal.

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